

MODERN LANGUAGE QUARTERLY

September, 1959

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CHAUCEUR'S WORSTE SHREWE: THE PARDONER

By GARLAND ETHEL

Diversity of opinion or, *in extremis*, dogma characterizes a deal of Chaucerian criticism and scholarship but nowhere more noticeably than in what has been written about the Pardoner. Most agree that the Pardoner is a bad man, but how bad or by what standard occasions immediate conflict. Kittredge, pretty much the initiator of modern commentary on the Pardoner, regarded him as "the one lost soul" among the Canterbury pilgrims. Lowes says "the Pardoner is evil to the core," and Kemp Malone declares him "the worst of the lot."¹

The fact that the Pardoner is evil has led these and other scholars to speculate about Chaucer's attitude toward the Pardoner or even as to whether Chaucer had a moral attitude toward him or any of the characters or tales. Conclusions range from pole to pole, and sometimes, as with Lounsbury, care must be taken to decide which pole is embraced. It seems one thing when Lounsbury writes that Chaucer "Above all else . . . was supremely a literary artist. The effectiveness of his production accordingly as a work of art was of vastly greater importance in his eyes than its moral quality." But elsewhere, he sees as an indubitable expression of moral judgment Chaucer's rejection of Griselda as a model, and he perceives her husband's conduct as "indefensible and monstrous." Ultimately clarified, Lounsbury's position is that

in making up our estimate of [Chaucer's] opinions we are not limited to what he did. We can appeal directly to what he said. . . . His words . . . make perfectly clear that the conclusions to which he came were not taken up inadvertently, but were the result of full reflection. . . .

The quasi-apology . . . in the general Prologue . . . gives us a clear insight into his ideas about the proper relation of art and morals. If it proves nothing else, it disposes of the theory that in his production he acted merely from a creative impulse which had about it no element of critical reflection. He must, he says, tell his tale "after his man". . . . So to do was not "villainy" on his part. . . . It was proper regard for the truth of nature, and therefore for the truth of art.²

Whether Chaucer was concerned with "the truth of art" would in all probability derive from his larger concern for the truth of nature, i.e., with sound knowledge about the nature of reality. That Chaucer's desire for knowledge did not end in knowing for the sake of knowing

¹ G. L. Kittredge, "Chaucer's Pardoner," *Atlantic Monthly*, LXXII (December, 1893), 829-33; John Livingston Lowes, *Geoffrey Chaucer and the Development of His Genius* (Boston and New York, 1934), p. 230 ("The one lost soul" is Lowes's phrasing of Kittredge); Kemp Malone, *Chapters on Chaucer* (Baltimore, 1951), p. 177.

² Thomas R. Lounsbury, *Studies in Chaucer* (New York, 1892), III, 348, 343-44, 349-50.

can best be judged by his explicit statements and by what his practice implies. To demonstrate this at large is not within the scope of this paper, but it can be suggested that Chaucer's view is indicated in his *Balade de Bon Conseyl* to de la Vache with its reiteration of Jesus' teaching that truth will make men free. As is well known, Chaucer drew heavily upon Boethius for whom, as for Jesus, truth was not something sought for its own sake, but as a guide to conduct, to achieving life that is more abundant.

Chaucer's counsel to de la Vache, with its repeated assurance that "trouthe thee shal delivere," clearly involves discrimination among values with consequent choice of the higher. The promised gain of richer life was to come through ceasing to be thrall to the world of courtly competition for courtly prizes. The values to be discriminated are indisputably moral values, and just what they are Chaucer has more fully particularized in *Gentilesse*, the essence of which is Jesus' declaration that those who continue in His word are His disciples indeed.

The *Canterbury Tales*, no less than the *Minor Poems*, contain many a "sovereyn notabilitee" touching moral judgment, as, for example, the conclusion of the *Nun's Priest's Tale*, where the moral fruit, not the narrative chaff, is recommended for taking and keeping. This urging, done in Paul's name, accompanies the Apostle's affirmation that all that is written is written for our instruction. The idea contained in these words and the words themselves are repeated in Chaucer's *Retracciouns* under circumstance so serious and solemn as to preclude easy dismissal of his statement of intent, that he too aimed at doctrine.

On these grounds it seems sound to think Chaucer did pass moral judgment upon the Pardoner and that the portrayal itself is the expression of such judgment. But here again there is great altercation in the schools and among the "clerkis," though perhaps not a hundred thousand of them as is the case with God's forwooting. Patch holds that Chaucer hated the Pardoner,³ whereas Kellogg has the poet hating the sin but not the sinner:

Like St Augustine, Chaucer saw no man who was not worthy of love; he hated with a *perfect* hatred—he hated the vice and loved the man: "And since no one is evil by nature but only by vice, he who lives according to God owes the evil a perfect hatred: let him not hate the man because of his vice, nor love the vice because of the man, but hate the vice and love the man."⁴

In dissent from both these views is the already mentioned doctrine of Chaucer's "pure art" aloofness or indifference to moral questions. A distinguished representative of this view is William Butler Yeats,

³ Howard Rollin Patch, *On Rereading Chaucer* (Cambridge, Mass., 1939), pp. 164, 183, 217. On the question of Chaucer's moral judgments, see the papers by William Witherle Lawrence and by Roger S. Loomis in *Essays and Studies in Honor of Carleton Brown* (New York and London, 1940).

⁴ Alfred L. Kellogg, "An Augustinian Interpretation of Chaucer's Pardoner," *Speculum*, XXVI (1951), 475. Italics added.

whom P. V. D. Shelly quotes and applauds while denying that Chaucer is a reformer or a satirist. Chaucer, Shelly writes, "is often called a satirist, but he is not a satirist, because he is not a reformer. The satirist is inspired by hate, or at least by aversion or distaste." Shelly goes on to say:

Chaucer sometimes resorts to satire or to the satirical method but only the better to reveal the humors of life and to add to his own and his reader's enjoyment. . . . Not by one jot or tittle would he have the Monk or the Pardoner . . . other than they are.⁵

Whether objective presentation—Chaucer's refusal to "telle his tale untrewe, or feyne a thyng, or fynde wordes newe"—is identical with abjuring moral questions and the reform they imply need not be settled before the Pardoner can be judged as an exemplar of sin.

Judgment, truly enough, does require a standard, either Chaucer's or the reader's, or that of a third party which might be shared by Chaucer, by the reader, or by both. If the Pardoner is to be adjudged the worst of the pilgrims, we must, in addition to having a standard, apply it to the others also. A standard adequate for such application is available. It is that of Church doctrine presented in the *Parson's Tale*, the orthodoxy of which is well attested.⁶ There is no fit ground for holding Chaucer unorthodox in his moral views, and further, from the standpoint of the Church, to reject the relevance of moral doctrine would be among the gravest of heresies. It should again be stressed, however, that Chaucer's own moral views are not crucial to the argument at hand. It is enough to realize that he knew his audience did hold moral views and that its members would pass judgment upon characters and actions just as the pilgrims themselves do after a tale has been told.

To an individual in Chaucer's flesh and blood audience, as to one in his imaginary audience of Canterbury pilgrims, the significance of a story would vary with personal experience and with those attitudes and beliefs acquired in consequence of having lived as a borel man, a gentle, or a clerk. More important, however, than these idiosyncratic and class influences was the doctrinal backlog of Church teaching that pulpit and catechism had made familiar to all classes.⁷ One manner in which this had been brought about is illustrated by the *Pardoner's*

⁵ Percy Van Dyke Shelly, *The Living Chaucer* (Philadelphia, 1940), pp. 24-25, 321. A complete counter to Shelly's view is to be found in the final chapter of John Speirs's *Chaucer the Maker* (London, 1951).

⁶ For an account of the earlier investigations, consult F. N. Robinson, *Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, 2nd ed. (Boston, 1957), pp. 765-66. This edition I have used for all citations of Chaucer's texts. See also: W. F. Bryan and Germaine Dempster, *Sources and Analogues of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales* (Chicago, 1941), pp. 723-60; Alfred L. Kellogg, "St. Augustine and the Parson's Tale," *Traditio*, VIII (1952), 424-30; G. R. Owst, *Preaching in Medieval England* (Cambridge, Eng., 1926), p. 247; Morton W. Bloomfield, *The Seven Deadly Sins* (East Lansing, Mich., 1952), pp. 86-88, 124-26, 192; Raymond Preston, *Chaucer* (London and New York, 1952), pp. 297-98.

⁷ G. R. Owst, "Preface," pp. x-xiii; *Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England* (Cambridge, Eng., 1933), pp. 149-209.

Tale itself, wherein doctrinal abstractions are not only bolstered by scriptural authority, but embodied and given dramatic reality in the *exemplum*. Chaucer's recognition of the presence and pertinence of Church teaching to the everyday thinking of his audience is reflected in many a metaphor, such as substance and accident in the thaumaturgy of glutton's cookery, but its living importance is even more strikingly attested by such interpolations as the Franklin's rejection of heathen astrological vanities:

. . . swich foleye
As in oure dayes is nat worth a flye,—
For hooly chirches feith in oure bileve
Ne suffreth noon illusioun us to greve.

That Chaucer's readers did indulge moral judgments upon characters and tales is evident from such things as Thomas Usk's tribute calling him "the noble philosophical poete in Englissh," who "in witte and in good reson of sentence . . . passeth al other makers."⁸ Better still for seeing how contemporaries regarded the poet as sage and teacher is Scogan's testament in his *Moral Balade* to the royal princes, commending to their attention the wisdom which he himself had found in Chaucer:

My mayster Chaucer, god his soule have!
. . . He sayde . . . laborious ought ye to be . . .
Here may ye see that vertuous noblesse
Cometh not to you be way of auncestrye,
But it cometh thorough leefful besinesse
Of honest lyfe . . .
Wherefore in youthe I rede you edefye
The hous of vertue . . .
Thinketh how, betwixe vertue and estat
There is a parfit blessed mariage;
Vertue is cause of pees, vyce of debat
In mannes soule
. . . that my mayster Chaucer sayth expresse . . .
And of this thing herke how my mayster seyde:

and at this point Scogan inserts the entire text of *Gentilesse*.

The sources of *Gentilesse* and its parallel in *The Wife of Bath's Tale* (1109-64) are commonly attributed to Seneca, Boethius, and Dante, but the doctrinal substance is clearly stated in the *Parson's Tale*,⁹ and this, being orthodox, carried the highest moral authority known to Chaucer's world. Consequently, when judgments were to be made as to good and evil, vice and virtue, the pronouncements of the Church were the standard habitually and automatically appealed to. In questions concerning truth the Church was also supreme; and so when Chaucer in the *General Prologue* specified "best sentence and moost solaas" as the grounds for judging excellence and awarding the

⁸ Walter W. Skeat, *Chaucerian and Other Pieces*, supplemental volume to *Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer* (Oxford, 1897), p. 123. For the quotation from Scogan's "Moral Balade," *ibid.*, pp. 239 ff.

⁹ Specifically pride of high ancestry *vs.* true gentility (460-69).

prize, he could reasonably expect the award to be acceptable only if made in accord with the criteria his age accepted.

Assurance as to whether the principles expounded in the *Parson's Tale* were real standards, really believed in, will be increased by reading what Edward, the Second Duke of York, says in his Prologue to *The Master of Game*. If such an independent spirit as he judged men and deeds by what we find in the *Parson's Tale*, and expressed himself in almost identical language, it is not overrash to think that others of Chaucer's contemporaries judged likewise. This is not to say that fourteenth-century England was an age of untarnished faith and unswerving moral and religious obedience. The *Canterbury Tales*, many minor poems, and *Piers Plowman* make any such notion ludicrous. That standards then as now were violated goes without saying, but, nonetheless, the voice of the Church was authoritative and provides us today with the means by which we can understand how folk of Chaucer's time gauged moral stature.

For taking the Pardoner's measure in terms of the seven deadly sins, we should imitate the Parson in avoiding the pitfalls of being overtextual. He knew that the substance rather than the hierarchy of sin is what counts most, but even so there remains a difficulty. Covetousness is the Pardoner's self-confessed master sin, but if he is to be ranked the worst of the pilgrims, should not pride have been named instead?

In the great medieval treatises the order of sins, as Bloomfield has pointed out, was not uniform. *Sīiaagl* (*superbia, ira, invidia, accidia, avaritia, gula, luxuria*), he says, was authoritative, but despite variations, *superbia* stood first unless, as with Gregory and Pennaforte, it was given a separate root position and not even considered one of the seven. The initial position was assigned to *inanis gloria*. Chaucer's stated order is *sīiaagl* (*ParsT*, 388, Robinson ed., p. 239), but later, in treating of the individual sins, he departs from his first classification by placing *invidia* before *ira*, an illustration of Bloomfield's statement that in the Middle Ages uniformity simply could not be attained.¹⁰

Difficulty as to the precedence of pride or covetousness is overcome not so much by appealing to a favored classification as by thinking of the nature of sin. Deadly sin, the Parson says, is

when the love of any thyng weyeth in the herte of man as muchel as the love of God, or moore. "Deedly synne," as seith Seint Augustyn, "is whan a man turneth his herte fro God, which that is verray sovereyn bountee, that may nat chaunge, and yeveth his herte to thyng that may chaunge and flitte." (*ParsT*, 367-68)

Any indulgence that involves breach of loyalty to God is to put self before God, and this is the essence of pride—the primacy of self-will over God's. Every deadly sin, Chaucer says, derives ultimately from pride, and each, therefore, in one sense, is a sin of pride (*ParsT*, 387-89). Each sin also involves an element of covetousness—the desiring

¹⁰ Bloomfield, pp. 86-88.

and yielding to desire for that which may only unlawfully be possessed or done. This double overlap to a degree makes covetousness identical with pride, and no contradiction results from holding with St. Paul that covetousness is the root of all evil, and with Gregory or Augustine that pride is the source of all sins. For any individual, the first and worst of sins is not a matter of name or place in a list, but rather it is that particular form of self-desiring that breaches obedience to God. Call it pride or call it covetousness, the thing signified is that mortal wedge which has split man away from God and lost him salvation.

In addition to the larger generalized meanings, each of these sins has recognizable branches or "speces" that are legitimately understood in a restricted sense. Thus *cupiditas* in pre-Christian, as in Christian, Latin signified immoderate desire both in the sense of a universal and as a particular directed toward specific concrete possessions or indulgences. When, for example, the ninth verse of I Timothy: 6 is read conjointly with the tenth, it is plain that the love of money need not be as a miser's, but as a means unto "many foolish and hurtful lusts." So it is with the Pardoner, who says he preaches "of nothyng but for coveityse," yet four lines later he speaks of it as the sin he uses. The Pardoner's succeeding lines should make amply clear that by "uses" he means not a practice of which he is guilty (and acknowledges separately), but the covetousness in his Church audience that he literally and instrumentally uses to gain the money necessary to his lavishly carnal living. Here is where the many branches, twigs, and tendrils of sin come in. Some are ends, some means. Together they are a formidable tangle of premeditated wickedness, devised by perverted reason, affirmed by perverted will. Their number and, even more so, their reprehensibility make the Pardoner prime in obnoxiousness to man and God.

The Pardoner, as previously commented, can be deemed worst only by comparison with the other pilgrims. To match him against each separately would in Chaucer's language be "al to long to reherce," and, therefore, most of them must be eliminated. Knight, Squire, Parson, and Clerk go out at once. The Plowman, too, because of his moral excellence, must be dropped; so too the Miller, Reeve, Summoner, and Manciple because they are lewd and of churlish station. The Prioress is disqualified for she is but shallow-pated, not vicious, one whose silliness aims at nothing worse than hope of being mistaken for a lady. The Franklin is put aside because his gluttony, mitigated by hospitality, is accompanied by many positive virtues, particularly those of duty to neighbor. Furthermore, because in his own words he is but a bore man, we may grant him some of the excusing accorded the untutored.

In sin, as in tragedy, one must be of high station for magnitude of fall. The Monk and the Friar are men of learning as is the Pardoner, but what best qualifies them for comparison is that, like him, they are

men of orders, the highest of all stations, from which a fall is greater than anything possible to nonclerical persons, however exalted. In the *Parson's Tale* we read that "Evere fro the hyer degree that man falleth, the moore is he thral, and moore to God and to the world vile and abhomyneable" (148), and

forther over, sooth is that hooley ordre is chief of al the tresorie of God . . . these ordred folk been specially tited to God, and of the special meignee of God, for which, whan they doon deedly synne, they been the special traytours of God and of his peple; for they lyven of the peple, to preyre for the peple, and while they ben suche traitours, here preyre awayleth nat to the peple. Preestes been aungeles as by the dignitee of hir mystere. . . . (891-96)

But the sinning priest is as an angel of darkness self-transformed as Satan was into the deceitful guise of an angel of light. These corrupt priests the Parson likens to sons of Eli, of Belial, of the devil. Three such ones, Monk, Friar, and Pardoner, impenitent and out of grace, are therefore in equal and continuing mortal jeopardy; yet by count and comment they are unequal in meriting damnation. The Friar is worse than the Monk, and the Pardoner the worst of the three.

The Monk's prime sin is pride, and after that, gluttony. When Chaucer says of him that "prikyng and of huntynge for the hare was al his lust," the implication is not that hunting merely ranked first among his pleasures, but that it had precedence over all else. Hunting per se was not ignoble, but for him indulgence of this aristocratic sport was spiritually fatal. Even for a nobleman, hunting was a sin if done in neglect of duty civil or religious.¹¹ By taking his position with the "newe world" and serving it, the Monk is clearly guilty of eleven of the sixteen major forms of pride listed by the Parson. These eleven are "Inobedience," "Ypocrisie," "Despit," "Inpudence," "Arrogance," "Insolence," "Inpacience," "Contumacie," "Presumpcioun," "Pertinacie," and "Veyne Glorie." Many a specific "twigge" could be named, such as the gold love-knot, fur-trimmed clothes, expensive "apparaille in thynges apertenen to ridynge," and the sustaining of vicious knaves to care for the "delicat horses that been hooden for delit" (*ParsT*, 430-34). More serious are "surquidrie" and scorn for the opinion of others, including that of the founders and head of his order, and finally of Pope, Church councils, and Holy Writ itself.¹²

Although busy in property and pleasure, the Monk in priestly office and in good works was slothful. His gluttony, triple of form, was excessive in quantity, variety, and delicacy of preparation (*ParsT*, 825-29). And for all his pride in "subtil engyn" of intellect, he had forfeited intellect's true greatness by perverting it into a pander and flatterer of appetite: "For certes, ther is no deedly synne, that it nas

¹¹ Edward, the Second Duke of York, *The Master of Game*, ed. Wm. A. and F. Baillie-Grohman (London, 1909), pp. 4-5.

¹² For the Monk's repudiation of the rule of his order because it was "sommel streit," see "Jack Upland," Skeat, p. 201. "Jack Upland" also contains many items of striking interest in relation to the Friar. They make the long-time attribution to Chaucer quite understandable.

first in mannes thought, and after that in his delit, and so forth into consentynge and into dede." "... perfit consentynge of his resoun . . . therof is no doute . . . is deedly synne" (*ParsT*, 295-97). There is mitigation, however, in that the Monk's sins never aimed at seduction and corruption of others. Except for neglect and setting a bad example, they redounded chiefly to self-injury.

With the Friar it was quite otherwise. His sins were directly and deliberately practiced upon others. And yet, aside from raging at those who withstood him, his sins were not done of "malisoun . . . swich as comth of irous herte," but came rather of a light heart in the guise of benign helpfulness, in hearing confession sweetly and giving absolution pleasantly. These, however, were grave offenses and of mortal danger to his eager-to-be-deceived penitents. His ministrations were fraudulent and hence inefficacious because for shrift to be lawful the priest as well as the confessant must be in faith of Holy Church (*ParsT*, 1010-14).^{12a} The Friar as chapman of spiritual merchandise was not only a simonist himself but a subborner and seducer of others to buy at a price those things "that aperteneth to the seintuarie of God and to cure of the soule." Those who do this, the Parson says, are "theves that stelen the soules of Jhesu Crist and destroyen his patrimoyne," and the theft is next greatest after that of Lucifer and Antichrist (*ParsT*, 780-90).

Guilt in this makes mention of the Friar's other sins seem superfluous, but they must be named lest the Pardoner's monstrous wickedness appear diminished. The Friar counts six of the deadly sins, with envy the only one not specifically in evidence. The absence of envy, considering the bonhomie of his character, comes of no oversight on Chaucer's part. Envy is defined by the Parson as "sorwe of oother mannes prosperitee," but with others' bounty the source of his own, the Friar would be dull indeed to rejoice in his patrons' loss and misfortune. Good will regarding outward and worldly things and debonairity of bearing were the Friar's stock in trade. To live loveless and snarling would no more be in accord with the Friar's "honestee" and "avauncement" than would acquaintance with beggars and sick lazars, which he steadfastly avoided. Neither would it accord with one whose eyes, when he sang, twinkled as stars on a frosty night; as the Parson says, "wel unneth is there any synne that it ne

^{12a} On this point, as can be seen by the following, the Parson's orthodoxy is certainly open to question: "from the controversy between St. Augustine and the Donatists . . . and especially the controversy between St. Stephen and St. Cyprian . . . we know that personal holiness or the state of grace in the minister is not a prerequisite for the valid administration of the sacrament. This has been solemnly defined in several general councils, including the Council of Trent. . . . Unworthy ministers, validly conferring the sacraments, cannot impede the efficacy of signs ordained by Christ to produce grace *ex opere operato* (cf. St. Thomas, III, Q. LXIV, aa. 5, 9)." *Catholic Encyclopedia* (1912), XIII, 303.

That the matter, however, had remained mooted seems attested by the fact that as much as two centuries later the Council of Trent was impelled to reaffirm Aquinas' doctrine.

hath som delit in itself, save oonly Envye, that evere hath in itself angwissh and sorwe." Debonairity, according to the Parson, is part of man's natural inclination to goodness (a point devotees of Rousseau and romanticism might well notice), but the Friar's debonairity was flawed in that it was not informed of grace.

His native goodness thus became a means unto evil with the result that his varieties of pride exceed those of the Monk. Only "Elacioun," "Swelling of Herte," "Contumacie," and "Irreverance" are missing. Their absence is quite in keeping with his general character. Possession of them would have been a handicap. The Friar's nimble alacrity in acceding to the mighty and his pleasant pronouncings of *In principio* brought him not only pence from the shoeless, but pounds from the well-heeled. His busy yet profitable brokerage on love days must have prevented many a conflict over debts and money that often resulted in murder. This was to his credit, for in mediation, too, the laborer is worthy of his hire.

The Friar, covetous to have and avaricious by withholding from the needy (*ParsT*, 744), is undeniably a self-seeker and though not truly social-minded is assuredly sociably inclined. He was good company, which made him the beloved familiar of country franklins and worthy women of the town whose tedium found easement in his fellowship as did their guilts through his pleasant absolution. Toward those many young women whose beguilement began in fair language lisped with wanton sweetness, the Friar was not ungrateful. Certainly the girls were not spurned, and the marriage they could never have hoped for with him found compensation in arranged matches, a generosity for which kings have been praised. Strong as a champion, he spared his lemans the special shame of being smatred as by "olde dotardes holours" full of desire but unable to do. This, too, argues extenuation, because his sin sprang not from mental concupiscence, but from full-fleshed desire. Even so, his guilt is great, for the be-reaving of maidenhood or the "approchyng of oother mannes bed" is deadly sin (*ParsT*, 842-74). The Friar stands in greatest danger because his sins are committed not out of ignorance, but knowingly, with the assent of reason; and yet in comparison with the Pardoner he is less the sinner, because nowhere does he express contemptuous unconcern for consequent spiritual disaster to others. His vial is full, but the Pardoner's spilleth over.

In the character of the Pardoner, Raymond Preston says, we are to reckon

with the most vigorous son of False-Seeming. . . .

The point is here:

For ofte good predicacioun
Cometh of evel entencioun

Romaunt of the Rose

For certes, many a predicacioun
Comth ofte tyme of yvel entencioun. . . .

Pardoner's Prologue

Chaucer develops a hint, a contradiction, from Jean de Meun into a great study in the problem of evil. So William Blake perceived, when he wrote of the quæstor: "This man is sent in every age for a rod and a scourge, and for a blight, for a trial of men, to divide the classes of men; he is in the most holy sanctuary, and has also his great use."¹³

This idea of contradiction, that evil as it develops and unfolds proves self-defeating and finally instrumental to greater good, is a concept familiar to those who have studied Milton's Satan, who would never have escaped the burning lake

but that the will
And high permission of all-ruling Heaven
Left him at large to his own dark designs,
That with reiterated crimes he might
Heap on himself damnation, while he sought
Evil to others, and enrag'd might see
How all his malice serv'd but to bring forth
Infinite goodness, grace and mercy shewn
On Man by him seduc't, but on himself
Treble confusion, wrath and vengeance pour'd.
(*P.L.*, I, 211-20)

This Miltonic thesis and its corollary, that God will not be frustrated, had been expounded some thirteen hundred years earlier by Augustine and amplified two centuries after him by Gregory the Great. In summarizing these doctrines in relation to the Pardoner, Kellogg remarks that in the Augustinian concept the sinner's vengeance, like Satan's,

takes the pattern of his perverted mind, and he attempts to pervert those who enjoy a state to which he himself cannot attain . . . his life is given up to evil and his spirit to progressive degeneration . . . the Augustinian conceptions of the punishment of sin by sin, and of pride as the first of the sins, were formalized by Gregory . . . into a progress of the seven deadly sins. This progress . . . moves through the sins of the spirit, and ends in the more material sins—avarice, gluttony, and lechery. Gregory, like Augustine, considers misery the effect of this progress. At least one commentator speaks of the effect as a kind of hell.¹⁴

This, too, Milton repeats in Satan's lines:

Me miserable! . . .
Which way I flie is Hell; myself am Hell
And in the lowest deep a lower deep
Still threat'ning to devour me opens wide,
To which the Hell I suffer seems a Heav'n.
(*P.L.*, IV, 73-78)

Prior to its emergence in Milton, another Gregorian doctrine, that it is wretchedness which prompts the sinner to attempt corruption of others, had appeared in Chaucer:

For, as seith the wise man, "Every fals lyvyng hath this propertee in hymself, that he that wole anoye another man, he anoyeth first hymself." And men shul

¹³ Preston, p. 229.

¹⁴ Kellogg, "An Augustinian Interpretation," p. 467.

understand that man shal nat taken his conseil of fals folk, ne of angry folk, or grevous folk, ne of folk that loven specially to muchel hir owene profit, ne to muche worldly folk, namely in conseilynge of soules. (*ParsT*, 640-41)

All these varieties of false living that disqualify a counselor of souls are found in the Pardoner. Of the seven deadly sins none is absent. Under pride he exhibits the Parson's entire listing.

Of these offenses most are so obvious and the lines containing them so well known that comment is unnecessary. A few, however, should be noticed, particularly those involving "inobedience," for we are so familiar with the Pardoner's abuses "we are in danger of forgetting . . . that under canon law very few indeed of the pardoner's actual practices were permitted."¹⁶ The Church thundered, but pardoners went their unperturbed way. As early as 1215 the Council of the Lateran forbade pardoners to preach even though duly accredited. In the churches they were limited to reading their letters. These restrictions were reaffirmed and expanded by Clement IV in 1267 and again through Clement V's initiative at the Council of Vienne, 1311-1312. In this legislation known as the "Abusionibus," diocesan bishops were given full authority over all quæstors, including power to punish breach of writs and regulations. "Such," Kellogg and Haselmayer tell us, "was the law of the pardoner in England in Chaucer's day,"¹⁶ a fact that adds significance to Piers Plowman on the pardon-hawking and absolution-mongering precursor of Chaucer's Pardoner:

There preched a pardonere • as he a prest were,
Brouȝte forth a bulle • with bishopes seles,
And seide that hym-self myȝte • assoilen hem alle
Of falsched of fastyng • of vowes ybroken.
Lewed men leued hym wel • and lyked his wordes,
Comen vp knelyng • to kissen his bulles;
He bonched hem with his breuet • and blered here eyes,
And rauȝte with his ragman • rynges and broches.
Thus they geuen here golde • glotonnes to kepe.

Were the bischop yblissed • and worth bothe his eres,
His seel shulde nouȝt be sent • to deceyue the peple.
(Prologue, 68-79 [Skeat, B Text])

Besides defying the Church, our Canterbury pardoner flouted civil law. Even if his bulls and pardons were genuine, he was making himself liable. In her study of the Pardoner's credentials, Marie Hamilton quotes Workman's remark in his *Wyclif* that "Time after time regulations were issued prohibiting the import into the kingdom of bulls and other instruments of the Roman Court, and ordering the arrest of those who had obtained such provisions," a statement Workman supported by citing the Patent Rolls for 1379-1380. Mrs. Hamilton adds that

¹⁶ Alfred L. Kellogg and Louis A. Haselmayer, "Chaucer's Satire of the Pardoner," *PMLA*, XLVI (1951), 251.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 255-56.

every volume of the *Calendar of Patent Rolls for Richard II* records assignments like the following:

1399 Oct. 18. Appointment of William Taillour of Dertemuth and Philip Molton as searchers in the part [*sic*] of Dertemuth, in accordance with the statute of 27 Edward III prohibiting the passage without license of persons beyond seas . . . or the bringing in of papal bulls.¹⁷

As judged by contemporaries, particularly those of the court circle, the Pardoner could not well have been excused on the ground of putting loyalty to the Church above obedience to the Crown. The Church held that sovereignty was ordained of God to the security of peace and order without which "the estaat of hooly chirche ne myghte nat han be, ne the commune profit myghte nat han be kept" (*ParsT*, 773-74). To Chaucer's audience the Pardoner would, therefore, have been guilty twice over.

"Inobedience" is but one aspect of pride, and pride is subject to such endless elaboration that all the Pardoner's sins could be discussed under this one heading. The other deadly sins, being simply convenient subdivisions, are necessarily interrelated and frequently coalesce. Thus the Pardoner's spitting out of venom under hue of holiness partakes of wrath and hypocrisy, but both these have their wellspring in envy, and this sin, the Parson says, "cometh properly of malice." Malice he divides into two species: first, a hardness of heart in wickedness that is blind to sin or reckons not of it; and second, the conscious waging of war against truth or against grace which God has shown another. Except in the Socratic sense, the Pardoner is not blind to his sin, but blatant in scorn of any reckoning here or hereafter. In his conscious warring against truth and against those whom grace makes obedient to truth, we see the fruit of his malice. Again, as Gregory says of Satan, the Pardoner with deep bitterness resents all that the faithful and the innocent enjoy and would deprive them of it. For corrupting them, deceit is a necessity, and this makes war against truth inevitable. The Pardoner deceives not only by giving evil counsel, but by means of a hundred false japes that his verbal skill and eager histrionism make effective.

Among these, backbiting is a most important instrument, and for use of any of the five forms it assumes in warring against truth, the Pardoner would require only the occasion. Possession of both the will and the needed cunning is demonstrated in the two forms he specifically boasts of practicing. The Pardoner does "consent gladly and herkne gladly to the harm that men speke of oother folk," and against priests, his economic rivals, he exploits wicked stories in slandering them as adulterous wives' lovers. More outrageous is the infamy anonymously and falsely imputed to those who have "trespassed" against him or his brethren. This stands among the gravest of sins, which the Parson, on the authority of Solomon and St. John, brands

¹⁷ Marie P. Hamilton, "The Credentials of Chaucer's Pardoner," *JEGP*, XL (1941), 71. *The Calendar of Patent Rolls*, IV, 142, reads "port" instead of "part," and the date 1389 Oct. 18 rather than 1399.

homicide of neighbor "by bakbitynge . . . For soothly, as wikke is to bynyme his good name as his lyf" (*ParsT*, 565-66). Thus envy, like the other deadly sins, emerges from its subjective state into concrete acts.

In warring against truth, the Pardoner achieves multiple success by depriving others of blessings that his wickedness makes inaccessible to him. Honest men are destroyed in their good name. Others who might stand in his way are intimidated, which leaves him free to gull the gullible into alienation from God. By exploiting their susceptibility to covetousness, he leads them into temptation. To accomplish this by ostensibly preaching against covetousness is to share in what Beelzebub says "would surpass common revenge" and upraise the Pardoner's joy in God's disturbance.

And so we come to ire, of which, as is to be expected, the Pardoner is also guilty:

For soothly, whoso hath envye upon his neighebor, anon he wole comunly fynde hym a matere of wratthe, in word or in dede, agayns hym to whom he hath envye. And as wel comth Ire of Pride, as of Envy; for soothly, he that is proud or envyous is lightly wrooth. (*ParsT*, 533-34)

Ire, the Parson says, takes from a man "all his debonaire lif espirituel that sholde kepen his soule." It overthrows God's due lordship, and instead of love to neighbor leads to scorn, hate, and willful injury of him. Here to the fullest we have the Augustinian doctrine of the punishment of sin by sin, for ire in a man "stryveth eek alday agayn trouthe. It reveth him the quiete of his herte, and subverteth his soule," a process that, as we shall see later, culminates in wanhope.

This really mortal anger is not the sort vented by the Pardoner upon rivals and opponents. That was but a "twigge" sprung from the greater wrath the Parson treats of under false swearing, wherein the hate is fundamentally against God. St. Augustine, the Parson says, described wrath as that "wikked wil to been avenged by word or by deed," and Chaucer's unnamed philosopher adds that ire "is the fervent blood of a man yquyked in his herte, thurgh which he wole harm to him that he hateth. For certes, the herte of man, by eschawfyng . . . wexeth so trouble that he is out of alle juggement of reason." This is precisely what makes such anger the equivalent of madness, wherein the victim's boasted intelligence, as in the case of Satan, becomes but the instrument of his own certain destruction. All swearing done of wrath is unlawful, but "much worse is forsweryng falsly" (*ParsT*, 600). The foulest of all false swearing and forswearing is that done by one who "taketh on hym the name of Crist, to be called a Cristen man, and liveth agayns Cristes lyvyng and his techyng." This, the Parson says, is to "taken Goddes name in ydel" (*ParsT*, 596).

So viewed, the Pardoner's life is one great and grisly oath, for nothing is as monstrous as the warring against man and God under the cloak of holy orders. Of this came the Pardoner's "horrible

sweryng of adjuracioun and conjuracioun," his necromancy with the "shulderboon of a sheep" which was not just a device for emptying pockets, but the sacriligious introduction of pagan magic into the church service. Concerning necromancers, the Parson declares that he "kan nat seye but that they doon cursedly and dampnably agayns Crist and al the feith of hooly chirche" (*ParsT*, 604). This, rather than mere gaining of money, must be thought the Pardoner's basic motivation, because it is God and the Church against which his ire is really directed.

It is in this light that the Pardoner's japes and pulpit gauds are to be viewed. Engendered of wrath, they fall under the sin of double tongue that "maken semblant as though they speeke of good entencion . . . and yet they speke of wikked entente." This is true of the Pardoner's tale and confession, for he turns the pilgrims' demand for some moral thing into an occasion of mocking Christian faith and its doctrines of goodness. No argument, no heretical corruption strikes so deadly a blow as priestly defection, for "He that loveth God keepeth his law and his word" (*ParsT*, 125). The Pardoner's saying that Christ's pardon "is best; I wol yow nat deceyve," came of no remorse, no "paroxysm of agonized sincerity," as Kittredge would have it. This piety is rather his crowning impiety, for, with the benediction ended, what he immediately proffers the pilgrims is not Christ's pardon, but his own. Though done in jest, it was, as Harry Bailly instantly recognized, a jesting with spiritual poison. Many have argued that even here the Pardoner was fishing for sterling and for pence. But it was not patronage he aimed at—his confession had made that impossible. What he did intend was overt and palpable mockery of salvation.

Besides sins of commission, the Pardoner is guilty in those of omission as well. They are but separate mesh in the same web. "Envye and Ire," the Parson says, "maken bitternesse in herte, which bitternesse is mooder of Accidie." Deprived of love for the good, the slothful pass from an early doing of God's service negligently into not doing it at all. The Pardoner is resolved to counterfeit none of the Apostles, and he affirms that he will "do no labour with myne handes, ne make baskettes, and lyve therby."¹⁸ His refusal is explicable because "Slouthe is so tendre and so delicaat, as seith Salomon, that he

¹⁸ Skeat, *Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, V, 274, note on line 445; John Matthews Manly, *Canterbury Tales* (New York, 1928), p. 616, note on line 444. On the Apostolic tradition to earn one's own sustenance, see: *Three Middle English Versions of the Rule of St. Benet* [Northern Prose Version], ed. Ernst A. Kock, EETS, o.s., Vol. 120 (1902), Cap. XLVIII, p. 32; also "The Caxton Abstract of the Rule of St. Benet," which reads: "soo certeyn other howres ben they occupied . . . in laboures wyth theyr body in thynges that is good and necessary to them or be place / for thenne they ben very religious, whan they thus folowe holy faders and doon as the apostles dyden" (p. 132).

For the Augustinian Rule with its repeated insistence upon manual labor, cf. "De Opere Monachorum," *Œuvres de Saint Augustin*, ed. J. Saint-Martin, 1^{re} série, 2^{me} édition, III: *L'Ascétisme Chrétien* (Paris, 1949), esp. pp. 317-43. Additional information is to be obtained in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, II, 79.

wol nat suffre noon hardness ne penaunce." The corrective to this "roten-herted synne of Accidie [is] to doon goode werkes, and manly and vertuously cacchen corage wel to doon"; but, says Gregory, good works are too burdensome and grievous for the slothful to undertake. The Pardoner, instead of aiding the poorest widow in a village, will have money, wool, or wheat from her, though in consequence her children starve. From such hardness of heart, the Parson says, "comth wanhope, that is despeir of the mercy of God" (*ParsT*, 677-93).

Whether the Pardoner's wanhope sprang from outrageous sorrow or from thinking his hard-hearted sins were beyond forgiving is for later consideration, but that he suffered is certain. The proof of wanhope is that "ther nys no felonye ne no synne that he douteth for to do" (*ParsT*, 696). The Pardoner hints at no line or limit at which he will boggle either in the sin of doing or not doing.

Of avarice, the next deadly sin, the Pardoner himself has said so much, as have his commentators, that detail can largely be dispensed with. It should be noticed, however, that of the two divisions of this sin he is guilty of both:

Coveitise is for to coveite swiche thynges as thou hast nat; and Avarice is for to withholde and kepe swiche thynges as thou hast, withoute rightful nede. Soothly, this Avarice is a synne that is ful dampnable. . . . For it . . . maketh that the avaricious man hath moore hope in his catel than in Jhesu Crist. . . . And therefore seith Saint Paul . . . an avaricious man is in the thraldom of ydolatrie. (*ParsT*, 744-48)

The Pardoner's getting and keeping and failing to share is sufficient evidence. The Parson's comment on the origin of this sin and its role as substitute for spiritual well-being is of striking psychological interest: "For soothly, when the herte of a man is confounded in itself and troubled, and that the soule hath lost the confort of God, thanne seketh he an ydel solas of worldly thynges" (*ParsT*, 740). The Pardoner possessed many gifts of the "goods of nature," such as wit, sharp understanding, "subtil engyn," and good memory; and yet we are obliged to say of him what the Parson says of the avaricious man generally—that he loses his entire possession who "ne seketh with the yifte of his good nothyng but synne." Awaiting those who have so traded with their talents is "thilke malisoun that Crist shal yeven at the day of doom to hem that shullen been dampned" (*ParsT*, 815-17).

The sixth deadly sin, gluttony, is defined by the Parson as an unmeasurable, disordinate appetite for eating and drinking. Today this, too, is recognized as a substitute for security in the love of God or man. We know from the Pardoner that his covetousness was the means to an end, and we know, too, that apart from eagerness to demonstrate his superiority in the competitive world of collusively wronging one's neighbor,¹⁰ the desired end was Sybaritic indulgence. Not only is this a mortal sin by itself, but it expresses a state of soul

¹⁰ *Lak of Stedfastnesse*, lines 10-12; *Legend of Good Women*, lines 476-79.

that might be called universal mortal jeopardy, for "He that is usant to this synne of glotony, he may no synne withstonde" (*ParsT*, 821).

And so the progress to damnation is unbroken: "After Glotony thanne comth Lecherie, for these two synnes been so ny cosyns that ofte tyme they wol nat departe." This doctrine is repeated by the Pardoner himself at the beginning of his tale where, in cataloging sins of the tavern, he tells of bauds, singers, waferers, and dancers, whose devilish office is to kindle and blow the fire of "lecherie that is annexed unto glotonye." Such conjunction in tavern young folk is understandable, but how lechery could be annexed to the winebibbing of the beardless Pardoner is not so immediately evident. Chaucer thought him a gelding or a mare, and yet the Pardoner would have a jolly wench in every town. This seeming incongruity may not really be so at all. Lechery is by no means dependent upon capacity, as the Parson makes plain in discussing senile lust (*ParsT*, 857-58), a point confirmed by the Reeve when speaking of old men like himself who, though hoar of head, still yearn for a green tail:

for thoghoure myght be goon,
Oure wyl desireth folie evere in oon. . . .

But age, he says, has its compensations:

Foure gleedes han we, which I shall devyse,—
Avaunting, liyg, anger, coveitise;
These foure sparkles longen unto eelde.

These sins, preëminent in the Pardoner, though not the product of age, must originate somewhere. The characterization as a gelding because of beardlessness and his goat-thin voice is what distinguishes the Pardoner from the Monk and the Friar, who, like Harry Bailly, lacked right naught of manhood. As for the Friar, "the very preve is the dede," and the Monk's manly capacities made the Host regret the rule of celibacy that deprived mankind of vigorous offspring and womankind of mates able to discharge Venus' payments at full in coin undebased of feebleness. The compliments Bailly paid various pilgrims, including the Nun's Priest, for eminent qualification as "tredefowel" indicates how highly prized it was of that society. And this is why Bailly, outraged at the Pardoner's sacrilege and boasted depravity, struck not where he was callously indifferent, but taunted the worthlessness of his testicles.

The fact of not being a man seems the likeliest determiner of the Pardoner's character. It explains at once the public bravado and the private make-believe. This is the Pardoner's one great lack, the thing he is ever trying to deny and compensate for. To argue thus is certainly to risk protest against finding sex everywhere and, in the Pardoner's case, of finding sex in the sexless. The entire onus, however, should not be charged to modern tendencies in literature and psychology. Chaucer himself was well aware that the unmeriting often desire the name and renown of lusty triumphant lovers. The

Pardoner, talking of a wench in every town, might well have stood one of the sixth company of petitioners in the *House of Fame*:

"Al was us never broche ne ryng,
Ne elles noght, from wymmen sent . . .
Yet lat us to the peple seme
Suche as the world may of us deme
That wommen loven us for wod. . . .
Thogh we may not the body have
Of wymmen, yet, so God yow save,
Leet men gliwe on us the name!
Sufficeth that we han the fame."
(1740-62)

To the same lack of manhood can be attributed the Pardoner's desire to shine in evil deservedly and be known for it. Those of this ilk were also in the *House of Fame*, telling of themselves and asking a boon:

"We ben shrewes, every wyght,
And han delyt in wikkednesse,
As goode folk han in godnesse;
And joye to be knowen shrewes,
And ful of vice and wikked thewes;
Wherefore we praye yow, a-rowe,
That oure fame such be knowe. . . ."
(1830-36)

It was Richard III's physical deformities that resolved him to be a villain. By the monstrosity of his crimes he would compel the world to acknowledge him a man. Who doubts the credibility of the Pardoner's confession should remember this.

The Pardoner, once aware of his condition, had but two courses open before him. One was to accept the dispensation of Providence, and accept with "buxomnesse," which was the *bon conseil* of Chaucer to de la Vache. Not done, the alternative was immortal hate in repayment for what the *eunuchus ex nativitate* would believe outrageous wrong visited by the hand of God. Therefore, not covetousness, but wrath against the Divine was the Pardoner's prime motivation. He would be revenged upon God and upon men whose normality he mortally envied. To achieve by guile what by force was impossible required the whole armor of sin. And so accoutered Chaucer portrays him, the wretchedest and vilest of the ecclesiastical sinners.

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THE 1720 VERSION OF *RURAL SPORTS* AND THE GEORGIC TRADITION

By JOHN M. ADEN

The 1720 revision of Gay's *Rural Sports*¹ has relevance for the history of English georgic literature beyond the scant and inaccurate recognition it has been given.² Though the poem is not weighty, it has persistently attracted notice, and its status as a genre piece deserves, therefore, better representation than it has been accorded.

The over-all changes may be outlined briefly. The poem was given a new subtitle (*Rural Sports. A Poem becoming Rural Sports. A Georgic*); a new motto; divided into two cantos; reduced in length some four-score lines (from 524 to 443); augmented by more than a score; radically reorganized; and subjected to a great variety of minute revisions, stylistic, prosodic, grammatical, imaginative, and so forth. Far from perfunctory, the revision was thoroughgoing, and rewards study by anyone interested in the growth of Gay's powers as an artist.³ Of particular historical interest, however, are those changes

¹ First published separately January 13, 1713; revised for *Poems on Several Occasions* (1720). See *Poetical Works of John Gay*, ed. G. C. Faber (London, 1926), p. xxxvi. All references are to this edition.

² Neither the poem nor its revision has gone unnoticed, but general inattention and carelessness have marked the comment. The first modern edition, *Poems of John Gay*, ed. John Underhill, The Muses Library (London, 1893), comments only on the change of motto. Thomas Seccombe (*Cambridge History of English Literature*, IX, 180) is the first but not the last of modern scholars to discuss the 1713 version as if it were the 1720 version. Phoebe Fenwick Gaye, in *John Gay* (London, 1938), pp. 68-71, takes note of the changes in capitalization and of the omission of passages pertaining to patronage, but follows Seccombe in speaking in one important instance of the 1713 text on the basis of an addition to the poem in 1720. W. H. Irving, in his *John Gay, Favorite of the Wits* (Durham, N. C., 1940), pp. 72-74, is careful not to confuse the two versions, but of the revisions he says only that they were "considerable . . . especially in structure." George Sherburn, in his essay in *Literary History of England*, ed. A. C. Baugh (New York, 1948), p. 919, makes only a passing reference to the poem. More has been said in a specific way about the revisions in a "gentleman's" edition of the poem by Owen Culbertson of the Harvard Law Club of New York City in 1930 (published by William Edwin Rudge) than in any scholarly source, and little is said there: see pp. xiv-xvi. Faber's edition, which is standard, merely reprints the two versions. In three studies devoted to the georgic in English—W. P. Mustard, "Virgil's Georgics and the British Poets," *American Journal of Philology*, XXIX (1908), 1-32; Marie Loretto Lilly, *The Georgic*, Hesperia, Supp. Ser., No. 6 (Baltimore, 1919); and Dwight L. Durling, *Georgic Tradition in English Poetry*, Columbia University Studies in English and Comparative Literature, No. 121 (New York, 1935)—no notice whatever is taken of the two versions of the poem (a point which should be of significance to them), and Durling falls into the error mentioned above of confusing the two texts (see pp. 37-39).

³ Cf. "ev'ry Tongue / Is fraught with Malice, and with Scandal hung" (1713: vv. 17-18), by 1720 changed from a conventional, neutral pairing to a double-edged satire, with point: "ev'ry tongue / Is moved by flatt'ry, or with scandal

which bring the poem into closer alignment with the georgic tradition. They affect both the structure and the tone of the poem, and, of course, its thematic and conventional aspects.

The alteration in the structure of the poem seems never to have been properly appreciated.⁴ It unmistakably goes beyond mere tightening and logical rearrangement. Its most noticeable direction is, in fact, toward genre. Strictly speaking, however, the poem never was a true georgic, but, as Dwight L. Durling observes, was "a combination of the three types of poem of field sports, which were georgic offshoots," the halieutic, ixeutic, and cynegetic.⁵ But even this falls somewhat short of an accurate description. The poem is really a combination of four types, georgic as well as halieutic, ixeutic, and cynegetic—in the original version (1713) all carelessly combined with a general stress on field sports. In 1720 Gay reorganized the poem with a view to promoting the georgic aspect. He began by changing his subtitle from "A Poem" to "A Georgic," and, as if to enforce that, his motto from "*Aegrestem tenui Musam meditabor Avena*"⁶ to "*—Securi Proelia ruris / Pandimus.*" The latter abandons Virgil as a text, but it also thereby abandons an eclogue association,⁷ and, though the new motto is from Nemesianus, it sounds a Virgilian note in the theme of peace. Finally, Gay set about enforcing his purpose by rearranging the parts and, to a lesser extent, by making certain additions and excisions.

Whereas in the first version the purely georgic part of the poem occupied an arbitrary and incidental position in the middle, preceded by the halieutic and followed by the ixeutic and cynegetic sections, in 1720 it was brought forward to a first position, preceding the field sports sections. Also, in 1720 the georgic theme was resumed in the conclusion, thus providing the poem with a georgic frame and, at the same time, with a structural unity it had not previously pos-

hung" (15-16; italics here and elsewhere mine). Similarly, another innocuous statement of 1713 becomes biting in 1720: "Whilst Calumny upon each Party's thrown, / Which Both abhor, and Both alike disown" (23-24) becomes in the revision, "While calumny upon each party's thrown, / Which both promote, and both alike disown" (21-22). In 1713 Gay had said of the rural maid, "Her Reputation, which she values most / Is ne'er in a Malicious visit lost" (257-58). In 1720 this simple description becomes a characterization, a tribute, and a memorial, to say nothing of its further, and even more delicately effective, indictment of the "courtly dame": "Her reputation, which is all her boast, / In a malicious visit ne'er was lost" (422-23).

⁴ W. H. Irving has only this to say: "Certainly the early version shows a lack of invention in the usual eighteenth-century meaning of that term, but Gay soon became conscious of this weakness, and made considerable revisions, especially in structure, when he prepared the poem for its appearance in the 1720 volume . . ." (p. 74).

⁵ ἁλιευτικός, pertaining to fishing; ἰξευτής, pertaining to fowling; κυνηγετικός, pertaining to hunting with dogs. See Durling, p. 37.

⁶ Apparently made up of two lines from the *Eclogues* (I.2 and VI.8). See Underhill, I, xxvi, n. 3.

⁷ Hence, though it may be permissible, as Phoebe Fenwick Gaye does (pp. 64, 68, 74-75), to speak of the 1713 version as a "pastoral," it is apparently contrary to Gay's intentions to speak of the 1720 version as such.

sessed.⁸ This reorganization and its significance can be grasped more readily in outline:

1713	1720
Prooemium	Prooemium
Haliëutic	Georgic
Georgic	Haliëutic
	Prooemium to Canto II
Ixeutic	Ixeutic
Cynegetic	Cynegetic
	Georgic (resumed)
Epilogue	Epilogue

These changes gave the poem what it had not before: dominant theme, unity, and improved status as a genre piece.

Changes within the divisions furthered the same general principle. In the georgic division, for example, an *O fortunatos nimium*⁹ passage (in this case the happy rural maid) is moved from its original position in the middle of the poem (243-68) to a position near the end (410-35), where it serves to complete the georgic frame. A second *O fortunatos* passage ("Oh happy Plains," 357-70) is likewise moved to a position near the end (396-409), where, in 1720, the two related passages appear together in an effective finale.

In the haliëutic section, verses 45-48 in the original (descriptive of fields, flowers, birds, and songs) are dropped in 1720 as being inappropriate in a section on fishing.¹⁰ The ixeutic and cynegetic sections undergo no internal modification, but have their settings somewhat altered. In 1713 the ixeutic was followed by a transitional passage on the greyhound (456-67) leading up to the cynegetic; in 1720 this passage is moved upward (289-300) to serve as a transition between the prooemium and the ixeutic. Actually, it does not seem as logical in this place. The cynegetic in 1720 is succeeded by an addition calling in the Muse (388-91), which, with a revision of some lines retained from 1713 (392-95), forms a conclusion not present in the earlier version.

In addition to these structural revisions, the georgic design was reinforced thematically. The genre is pointed up in the alteration of "Here I with *Virgil's* Muse refresh my Mind" (290), to "Here I peruse the *Mantuan's* Georgic strains" (67). The humane motive, partly prompted by Virgil's example and partly no doubt by the growing humanitarianism of Gay's own age, is reflected in a group of some half-dozen changes in the poem.¹¹ Its most pronounced occurrence is an addition forming the conclusion to Canto I:

⁸ In 1713 the epilogue (retained but modified in 1720) only weakly performed this function.

⁹ Virgil, *Georgics* II.459 ff.

¹⁰ Also, in the fly fishing passage there is an improvement in the logic of presentation: from (a) fly fishing, (b) how to make the fly (1713) to (a) introduction, (b) how to make the fly, (c) fly fishing (1720).

¹¹ In georgic poetry in English, Gay was preceded in this note by John Philips (see Cyder, Book II, 169-76). M. G. Lloyd Thomas, ed., *Poems of John Philips*,

I never wander where the bord'ring reeds
 O'erlook the muddy stream, whose tangling weeds
 Perplex the fisher; I, nor chuse to bear
 The thievish nightly net, nor barbed spear;
 Nor drain I ponds the golden carp to take,
 Nor trowle for pikes, dispeoplers of the lake.
 Around the steel no tortur'd worm shall twine,
 No blood of living insect stain my line;
 Let me, less cruel, cast the feather'd hook,
 With pliant rod athwart the pebbled brook,
 Silent along the mazy margin stray,
 And with the fur-wrought fly delude the prey.

Despite the lines about the "tortur'd worm," however, Gay retained advice (159-70) about the use and nurture of worms, suggesting that the new attitude was as much an expression of convention as of conviction. On the other hand, he did drop verses 69-70 of the original: "A twining Earth-worm he draws on with Care, / With which he neatly hides the pointed Snare." And the modification of 1713's "the tortur'd Bait" (79) to "the twining bait" of 1720 (153) is unmistakable in intent.¹² Finally, it would appear that the change of the sex of the hare from male in 1713 to female in 1720 was calculated to evoke pity. Whatever the source of the mood, Gay's adoption of it is both symptomatic and exemplary of its emergence as a stock motif in the eighteenth-century didactic epic.

The seasonal theme conspicuous in Virgil's example is underscored in the change of "As in successive Toil the Seasons roll" (376) to "As in successive course the seasons roll" (121); the revision of verse 43 in the original to include "genial spring" (123 in 1720 version); and in the addition of these lines to the revised version: "Cool breathes the morning air, and winter's hand / Spreads wide her hoary mantle o'er the land" (343-44). The city-country contrast, also a motif deriving from Virgil, is asserted in the revision of the last two lines of the poem: "Farewel. —Now Business calls me from the Plains, / Confines my Fancy, and my Song restrains" to "Farewel. —The city calls me from your bow'rs: / Farewel amusing thoughts and peaceful hours." Finally, there is a decided tendency in the 1720 version to make greater use of the magisterial tone of Virgil. A few examples will have to suffice:¹³

1713. The Fisherman does now his Toils prepare (55)

1720. Now let the fisherman his toils prepare (131)

Percy Reprints, No. X (Oxford, 1927), p. xl, points out that Philips' "little lives" found its way into Pope's *Windsor Forest* (line 135), where the same humane note is sounded, again in advance of Gay's revision. Pope's lines (111-18) on the pheasant may also have sprung partly from Philips' example, though part of it (115-18) is clearly indebted to Virgil, *Georgics* III.525-26, in which pity is expressed for the disease-stricken bullock. Virgil is the ultimate source for the pity motif as a stock feature of the georgic. Gaye (p. 69) remarks on the humane note in *Rural Sports* without noting that it appears only in the revised version.

¹² Cf. also verses 84-88 in 1713 with verses 157-58 in 1720.

¹³ But see also verses 155 (< 83), 159 (< 89), 209 (< 109), 345-46 (< 422-23).

1713. The Reapers to their sweating Task repair
To save the Product of the bounteous Year (353-54)
1720. Now, now, ye reapers, to your task repair,
Haste, save the product of the bounteous year (285-86)
1713. The Greyhound now pursues the tim'rous Hare (456)
1720. Let thy fleet greyhound urge his flying foe (290)

The effect of such a revision can never, of course, be appreciated in mere analysis. A reading of the poem itself is necessary. When that is done, first in the original and then in the 1720 version, the right of *Rural Sports* to better representation in the annals of georgic poetry becomes apparent.

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CANADIAN LITERATURE

Canadian Literature, a newcomer in the field of quarterly journals, has just made its bow to the reading public with its Summer, 1959, issue. Published by the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C., with Professor George Woodcock as editor, it proposes to concentrate on Canadian writers and their works. By taking stock of Canada's literary potentials and performances through critical, historical, and biographical analyses, it plans to reveal to its own folk and to those abroad the character and standing of the Canadian genius.

The journal extends generous hospitality not only to the forms and aspects of critical pronouncements, but also to the personal slant of the critic. Furthermore, it welcomes contributors from below the border and from abroad as well. The companion title *Litterature Canadienne* indicates equality of English and French speech. But, as all journals would insist, what is rigorously required is originality of thought and maturity of style.

This introductory number with its six articles and various reviews promises good faring for those curious about the Canadian people and their ways of living and thinking. We wish rich fulfillment to the efforts of the staff guiding the course of the journal. The subscription price is \$3.00 a year; subscriptions should be addressed to the circulation manager, Basil Stuart-Stubbs, University of British Columbia Library.

EDWARD G. COX

FOLLY INTO CRIME THE CATASTROPHE OF *VOLPONE*

By S. L. GOLDBERG

The catastrophe that befalls the protagonists of *Volpone* has worried critics as it evidently worried Jonson himself. Jonson's editor only echoes common opinion when he judges it too grim for comedy and compares it, as he compares the whole play, to the tragedy of *Sejanus*.¹ And in his dedicatory Epistle, Jonson admits the problem, even while he defends his own solution of it:

And though my *catastrophe* may, in the strict rigour of *comick* law, meet with censure, as turning back to my promise; I desire the learned, and charitable critick to haue so much faith in me, to thinke it was done off industrie: For, with what ease I could haue varied it, neerer his scale (but that I feare to boast my owne faculty) I could here insert. But my speciall ayme being to put the snaffle in their mouths, that crie out, we neuer punish vice in our *enterludes*, &c. I tooke the more liberty; though not without some lines of example, drawne euen in the ancients themselues, the goings out of whose *comadies* are not alwaies ioyfull, but oft-times, the bawdes, the seruants, the riuals, yea, and the masters are mulcted: and fitly, it being the office of a *comick-Poet*, to imitate iustice, and instruct to life, as well as puritie of language, or stirre vp gentle affections.

On the other hand, two recent critics have defended the ending on rather different grounds. The first points out that, since *Volpone* is after all a comedy, the ending is not to be taken too seriously: it is "not the necessary culmination of a severe and gloomy play, but rather a concession to the Puritans and one which might easily be withdrawn." The other, remembering perhaps that so conscious and sophisticated an artist as Jonson would hardly have made concessions to his enemies in a matter of this kind, offers a more convincing explanation in terms of the play itself. Its theme, he argues, is Folly; its characteristic method is irony; and its natural conclusion is the revelation of folly in Volpone and Mosca themselves.² But despite the greater subtlety of these interpretations of the play compared to Herford's, they seem to me to ignore one quality of it—more particularly, one quality of the verse—to which Herford obviously responded and which goes some way toward justifying his and Jonson's doubts about the catastrophe.

If, despite Herford's objections, we take Folly to be the central theme of the play, it must be in an older and wider sense of the word. What is involved is not mere borrowing from *The Praise of Folly*, but rather the imaginative realization of a whole range of related

¹ Ben Jonson, ed. C. H. Herford and Percy Simpson (Oxford, 1925-52), II, 49-50, 60. All quotations are from this edition.

² Ralph Nash, "The Comic Intent of *Volpone*," *SP*, XLIV (1947), 30; John S. Weld, "Christian Comedy: *Volpone*," *SP*, LI (1954), 172-93.

moral attitudes.³ At the lowest level, it is the simple folly of Sir Politic Would-be with his absurd pretensions to worldly wisdom; at the next level, it is the folly of the suitors for Volpone's wealth, whose pretensions to cleverness are also exposed as absurd; at the next, the folly of Volpone and Mosca, who are deceived by their own cleverness; and finally, in Celia (and Bonario) we see perhaps a distant reminiscence of the "folly" of Lear's Fool, which is the unworldly wisdom of the simple and innocent.⁴

More than that, Folly, in its widest Renaissance sense of a false estimation of reality or the Nature of Things, is the object of the moral satire. All the moral perversions in the play, from Volpone's sensual naturalism to the miserable avarice of the suitors, from the brilliant Machiavellism of Mosca to its farcical parody in Sir Politic, from Scoto's quackery to Corvino's jealousy, are the outcome and the dramatic expression of fundamental delusion. Folly must be understood as Erasmus or More or Pope understood it, or as Swift understood madness: it is "the perpetual possession of being well deceived." In fact, the play explores the question presented in the brilliant first scene:

Fooles, they are the onely nation
Worth mens enuy, or admiration;
Free from care, or sorrow-taking,
Selues, and others merry-making:
All they speake, or doe, is sterling.

O, who would not bee
Hee, hee, hee? (I.ii.66 ff.)

The most important element in this exploration is the curious double-edged irony some critics have noted, the way in which Volpone and Mosca are used by Jonson to direct his satire at the others' vices and yet are themselves the unconscious objects of their own attack. Their irony at the expense of the suitors cuts back, as it were, producing a second irony beyond. Moreover, as L. C. Knights and D. J. Enright have observed, if Volpone and Mosca serve to "place" the others, they are themselves morally "placed" by the exaggeration and blasphemy implicit in their language; to perceive the nature of the poetry they speak is to perceive the nature of their outlook.

In the opening scene of the play, for example, Volpone's moral

³ Thus Jonas A. Barish, "The Double Plot in *Volpone*," *MP*, LI (1953), 83-92, makes an illuminating exploration of the connections between Folly and the various distortions of nature in the play. For Herford's objections, see IX, 678-79; and for those of a more recent critic, see Edward B. Partridge, *The Broken Compass* (London, 1958), p. 105 and note. Despite these objections, however, I still believe Folly a better term than "greed" or "feeding" to suggest the unity of the play.

⁴ I agree with Wallace A. Bacon, "The Magnetic Field: The Structure of Jonson's Comedies," *Huntington Library Quarterly*, XIX (1956), 137-38, that there is a certain irony in the treatment of Celia and Bonario, though not altogether with the reason he gives for this. May not the source of the irony lie in the nature of their "folly" and its relation to that of the other characters?

corruption emerges unmistakably from the blasphemous, unrestful imagery and tone of the poetry, just as, in the scene most crucially revealing of the moral theme, his seductive speeches to Celia expose in their oversensual, overexcited tone the essential "folly" of his values.⁶ But placing their emphasis so heavily on the critical effect of the poetry, both Knights and Enright tend to underrate the dynamics of the play, the controlling significance of the plot. The result is that they overlook the problem of the catastrophe. That Volpone should himself be caught in Mosca's "fox-trap," and Mosca, by the last twist of the theme, find himself unable to carry his schemes through, is clearly the proper issue of the action. Their deceptions are a symbol of moral delusions, including their own, and Jonson's plot points the self-frustrating, suicidal instability of a world based on such values. But that they should fall catastrophically into the merciless hands of the Venetian state, appropriate as it may seem didactically, is another matter.

It may well strike the reader as rather too drastic a collapse, too external and striking a punishment, for the tone and mood of the play. Nor is it simply a matter of Jonson's didactic intent being imposed on the play at the last moment, an inorganic addition that could easily be "withdrawn." One of the most interesting aspects of the catastrophe is that it arises naturally from the rest of the play and reflects in its ambiguous resolution the necessary ambiguity of Jonson's satirical technique.

If we agree that the main effect of Volpone's and Mosca's poetry is self-critical, we must be careful not to regard it as merely critical. Their attitudes possess a menace in their very perversion, which is demonstrated by the play itself; but they also possess a menace in that we, the audience, are involved in them too. Indeed, this is what transforms *Volpone* from a moral fable into a poetic satire. Jonson's poetic and dramatic realization of the fundamental perversities in Volpone and Mosca is designed to draw our sympathies (or perhaps "empathies" is a more accurate term) toward the specious and false. Only on this condition can satire work its moral catharsis.⁶

This is the necessary qualification to the comment often made that we remain quite detached from Jonson's characters and their world. We do remain detached or critical, but not completely detached from what they represent. Although we do not regard Volpone and Mosca as "sympathetic characters" in the usual sense, we are forced to participate in many of their feelings and hence in some of their outlook; without that, we should not, as one critic puts it, be "forced to doubt [our] own moral position."⁷ The judgment that criticizes the corruption is our own. In the last analysis, the object of the satire is not

⁶ L. C. Knights, *Drama and Society in the Age of Jonson* (London, 1937), Chap. 6; D. J. Enright, "Poetic Satire and Satire in Verse," *Scrutiny*, XVIII (1951), 211-23. This point is repeated in greater detail by Partridge, Chap. V.

⁷ For a closely similar point, see H. R. Hays, "Satire and Identification: An Introduction to Ben Jonson," *Kenyon Review*, XIX (1957), 271.

external to us, but within ourselves, and the force of the satire lies in the more permanent judgment the satirist directs, and helps us to direct, on our temporary disease. Volpone and Mosca are instruments in Jonson's hands to plague us, for it is our vision of a world where Folly is the end of man that he wishes to create, and create in such a way that we reject it even as we possess it. Were we not tempted, our rejection would have no significance.

Perhaps this is only another way of saying that great satire seems to delight in the very object of its attack. When Pope, for example, portrays the heroine of the *Rape of the Lock* at her dressing-table in terms obviously critical of "the sacred rites of pride," he does so in such a way that we also imaginatively enjoy, even participate in, the wonders of her toilet at the same time as we "place" them. Similarly, as F. R. Leavis has pointed out, Pope's "pleasure *with*" the objects of his satire in *The Dunciad* is a crucial part of the whole effect.⁸ It is more than a detached imaginative liveliness; it is an imaginative life at the heart of the satirist's moral attitude, guaranteeing, as it were, the validity of the criticism.

Jonson's presentation of Volpone and Mosca is analogous to Pope's presentation of Belinda. The blasphemy and exaggeration of Volpone's opening speech, for instance, betray him to our moral judgment, just as the hint of blasphemy betrays Belinda:

Good morning to the day; and, next, my gold:
Open the shrine, that I may see my *saint*.
Haile the worlds soule, and mine. More glad then is
The teeming earth, to see the long'd-for sunne
Peepe through the hornes of the celestiaall *ram*,
Am I, to view thy splendor, darkening his:
That, lying here, amongst my other hoords,
Shew'st like a flame, by night; or like the day
Strooke out of *chaos*, when all darknesse fled
Vnto the center. O, thou sonne of Sol,
(But brighter then thy father) let me kisse,
With adoration, thee, and euery relique
Of sacred treasure, in this blessed roome.
Well did wise Poets, by thy glorious name,
Title that age, which they would haue the best;
Thou being the best of things: and far transcending
All stile of ioy, in children, parents, friends,
Or any other waking dreame on earth.
Thy lookes, when they to VENVS did ascribe,
They should haue giu'n her twentie thousand CVPIDS;
Such are thy beauties, and our loues! Deare *saint*. . .

(I.i.1-21)

But when Herford, apparently missing this irony, says of the verse that it "transfigures avarice with the glamour of religion and ideal-

⁷ Alexander H. Sackton, *Rhetoric as a Dramatic Language in Ben Jonson* (New York, 1948), p. 138.

⁸ F. R. Leavis, *Revaluation* (London, 1949), pp. 94 f.

ism,"⁹ he is not quite as misguided as later critics have made out. Or when another critic,¹⁰ overlooking the moral corruption expressed in the verse itself, describes Volpone's language to Celia in the seduction scene—

See, behold,
What thou art queene of; not in expectation,
As I feed others: but possess'd, and crown'd.
See, here, a rope of pearle; and each, more orient
Then that the braue *Ægyptian* queene carrous'd:
Dissolue, and drinke 'hem. See, a carbuncle,
May put out both the eyes of our St. MARKE;
A diamant, would haue bought LOLLIA PAVLINA,
When she came in, like star-light, hid with iewels,
That were the spoiles of prouinces; take these,
And weare, and loose 'hem: yet remains an eare-ring
To purchase them againe, and this whole state.
A gem, but worth a priuate patrimony,
Is nothing: we will eate such at a meale.
The heads of parrats, tongues of nightingales,
The braines of peacocks, and of estriches
Shall be our food: and, could we get the phoenix,
(Though nature lost her kind) shee were our dish.

(III.vii.188-205)

—as "magnificent imagery . . . [rolling] in wave after wave of voluptuous grandeur," however limited an account of the effect this is, it is not totally absurd. In both cases the apparently naïve critic has responded to a quality that may be overlooked in too concentrated an awareness of the moral issues at stake—the imaginative delight, the expansiveness, the generosity almost, in the poetry Volpone speaks. We are, and we are surely meant to be, attracted.¹¹

The function of this attraction is not merely to reveal the suitors' "utter poverty of spirit" in contrast with Mosca's "intelligence" and Volpone's "romantic exuberance and joy in living,"¹² nor merely to lead us into identifying ourselves with their explicit criticism of the others. More fundamentally, it serves Jonson's didactic intent. Our enjoyment of Mosca's self-delighting Machiavellian roguery, for example, is demanded by the poetry he utters:

⁹ Herford and Simpson, II, 58. Cf. the remarks of U. M. Ellis-Fermor, *The Jacobean Drama* (London, 1936), pp. 113-15.

¹⁰ Helena Watts Baum, *The Satiric and the Didactic in Ben Jonson's Comedy* (Chapel Hill, 1947), pp. 98-99, cited by Weld, p. 189.

¹¹ He is continually presented, we should notice, as a *magnifico*, a prince of his world of desire and sensual pleasure. Moreover, in his attempted seduction of Celia, he presents the moral problem Shakespeare's Tarquin had presented. He refuses to recognize Celia's appeal to religion, while her repudiation of nature ("that vnhappy crime of nature, / Which you miscall my beauty") is as equally irrelevant as Lucrece's. After all, beauty is not a crime of nature; nature has its proper uses. The scene could only be concluded by Volpone taking his position to its logical conclusion in rape; but since Jonson has made his point, he can afford to break the tension with Bonario's melodramatic rescue. I suspect this scene should be played with the touch of irony at Bonario's expense that the writing seems to suggest. Cf. Bacon, p. 137.

¹² Enright, p. 213.

I Feare, I shall begin to grow in loue
 With my deare selfe, and my most prosp'rous parts,
 They doe so spring, and burgeon; I can feele
 A whimsey i' my blood: (I know not how)
 Successe hath made me wanton. I could skip
 Out of my skin, now, like a subtile snake,
 I am so limber. O! Your Parasite
 Is a most precious thing, dropt from aboue,
 Not bred 'mong'st clods, and clot-poules, here on earth.
 (III.i.1-9)

But our delight makes us, if only partially and temporarily, Mosca's accomplices. We are *hypocrites lecteurs*; our response is compromised by its ambiguity. To correct it, or rather to enable us to correct it, Jonson administers the shocks of his action.

The same process, incidentally, may be observed in *The Alchemist*. We are largely brought inside the world of Face and Subtle, delighting in the efficiency, the ingenuity, the justice of their deceptions, even while we remain sufficiently detached to be critical of the values they represent. Consequently, our view of Sir Epicure Mammon is significantly different from our view of the comparable outlook embodied in Volpone. Mammon is already placed for our critical judgment when he appears at the beginning of Act II; we already know him to be the greatest gull of all—"if his dreame last, hee'll turne the age, to gold" (I.iv.29). His speeches, however like Volpone's in attitude, therefore, are very different in dramatic tone and effect—the magnetic attraction is missing.¹³

VOLPONE: Thy bathes shall be the iuyce of iuly-flowres,
 Spirit of roses, and of violets,
 The milke of vnicornes, and panthers breath
 Gather'd in bagges, and mixt with *cretan* wines.
 Our drinke shall be prepared gold, and amber;
 Which we will take, vntill my roofo whirle round
 With the *vertigo*: and my dwarfe shall dance,
 My eunuch sing, my foole make vp the antique.
 Whil'st, we, in changed shapes, act *OVIDS* tales,
 Thou, like *EVROPA* now, and I like *IOVE*,
 Then I like *MARS*, and thou like *ERYCINE*,
 So, of the rest, till we haue quite run through
 And weary'd all the fables of the gods.
 (III.vii.213-25)

MAMMON: I will haue all my beds, blowne vp; not stuft:
 Downe is too hard. And then, mine oual roome,
 Fill'd with such pictures, as *TIBERIVS* tooke

¹³ This, I believe, is a necessary qualification to Harry Levin's view in "Jonson's Metempsychosis," *PQ*, XXII (1943), 238-39, that the two characters "speak the same magnificent language." In his chapter on *Volpone*, Partridge occasionally notes the vitality and attraction of which I have been speaking: see, for example, p. 83 (on the importance of the characters being human, not figures in a bestiary); p. 92 (on Volpone's love-song to Celia); and pp. 94 and 97 (on the erotic vision Volpone presents). But he does not take any consistent account of their effect in the dynamic of the play, being concerned rather with tracing the theme of moral perversion especially as it appears in the "imagery." In effect, he almost ignores the action of the second half of the play.

From ELEPHANTIS: and dull ARETINE
 But coldly imitated. Then, my glasses,
 Cut in more subtil angles, to disperse,
 And multiply the figures, as I walke
 Naked betweene my *succuba*. My mists
 I'll haue of perfume, vapor'd 'bout the roome,
 To loose our selues in; and my baths, like pits
 To fall into: from whence, we will come forth,
 And rowle vs drie in gossamour, and roses.
 (II.ii.41-52)

All this has a direct bearing on the catastrophe of *Volpone*. To appreciate and assent to the justice done to the protagonists, we must be detached from them. But although our "feelings-with" Volpone have been qualified from the start by our perception of his inner corruption, by our perception of Mosca's superior cunning, and by such intermittent revelations as the attempted rape of Celia, and although our "feelings-with" Mosca have been qualified in the same way (if to a lesser degree), we still retain some by the end of Act V—enough, at any rate, to find the catastrophe too severe a moral catharsis. Our judgment may assent, but our feelings are still lagging. The necessary ambiguity of our response to the two villains, in fact, prevents any easy resolution of the action.

Nor, given his theme, is it easy to see how Jonson could have avoided the problem. After the end of Act III, Volpone's and Mosca's schemes involve a shift from a private to public Folly, a further projection of the theme on to the larger screen of political Justice. The development is signaled by Sir Politic Would-be—"I told you, sir, it was a plot"—and although he is (foolishly) wrong, he is (ironically) right. His references to Machiavelli and Bodin, the Renaissance spokesmen of political naturalism, are no accident. In the subsequent court scene, the trial of Celia and Bonario is accompanied by the perversion of family love, of innocence, modesty, and honest witness; the individual conscience is shown powerless against the power of the state; and as Voltore points out, ironically enough, the perversion of Justice is a threat to the whole order of society:

O, my most equall hearers, if these deedes,
 Acts, of this bold, and most exorbitant straine,
 May passe with sufferance, what one citizen,
 But owes the forfeit of his life, yea fame,
 To him that dares traduce him? which of you
 Are safe, my honour'd fathers? I would aske
 (With leaue of your graue father-hoods) if their plot
 Haue any face, or colour like to truth?

(IV.vi.38-45)

The villains produce their own order, "so rare a musique out of discords" (V.ii.18), but it is an inversion of the proper and natural order. No Renaissance audience needed to be told that such perversions of the natural order ordained by God were incompatible with the survival of the community, were, indeed, in the long run impos-

sible. In Act V, Jonson portrays it breaking down from its own internal incompatibilities and inconsistencies.

Nevertheless, although the didactic point is established by that breakdown, Jonson has necessarily involved the power of the state as one of the actors. The question is now not merely one of "poetic justice" but also of civil Justice. Moral folly has become judicial crime. And crime, as crime, must receive our total repudiation. We may sympathize with the criminal, or his motives, we may perhaps enjoy the excitement of his criminal career, we may even think his crimes not really crimes, but if we do see his deeds as willfully and seriously destructive of laws necessary to society, then as social animals we inevitably reject them completely and wholeheartedly. Comedy about crime is possible only if it inhibits the perception of the moral significance of the crime—as *Kind Hearts and Coronets* shows, we can even laugh at multiple murder so long as we never see it as really murder.

There was good reason in Jonson's decision to "sport with humane follies, not with crimes."¹⁴ With the punishment of Celia and Bonario in Act IV of *Volpone*, the problem of our divided feelings is not acute, especially since it is clearly not final. But with the catastrophe in Act V, our feelings are finally and overwhelmingly directed against Volpone and Mosca. The earlier dynamic interplay of "feelings-with" and "feelings-against" is drastically resolved.

We feel this as drastic, I believe, because the final judgment uses our earlier enjoyment of the villains' corruption—its force as a judgment depends upon it, in fact—but it does not account for the enjoyment. For example, the catastrophe cuts Volpone and Mosca to the same level as the suitors, despite our earlier sense that they were, at least in some respects, better. On consideration, of course, we see that the Advocate's judgment is just. The trouble is, we have to consider. The play itself does not both distill and at the same time purge our ambiguous attraction in dramatic terms. To put it another way, the moral judgment offered is appropriate, but it is not quite adequate to our total response to the play: the situation had seemed, or felt, more complex. The result is that we are not ready for the necessary simplification when it is demanded, and our detachment is forced instead of arising naturally and freely.

To say that Jonson's didacticism conflicted with his aesthetic purposes is too simple. His aesthetic purposes were themselves didactic, if we mean by that the dramatic expression of a deeply moral imagination; and the catastrophe does arise organically from the theme of the play. The problem that faced him was how to enforce a proper judgment on the most fundamental moral perversions while still re-

¹⁴ *Every Man in His Humour*, Prologue (1616), line 24. It is most probable that this was written for the revised version, i.e., after *Volpone* (see Herford and Simpson, I, 333-34, and IX, 343-44), in which case it may represent Jonson's maturer judgment on the problem discussed in this essay.

taining the effects of comedy—a problem that faced him only in *Volpone* and in *The Alchemist*. His solution in the former is, in fact, a surrender, or at best a technical trick. The concluding speech of the Advocate is as appropriate to a morality, or even some Elizabethan tragedies, as to a comedy:

Now, you begin,
When crimes are done, and past, and to be punish'd,
To thinke what your crimes are: away with them.
Let all, that see these vices thus rewarded,
Take heart, and loue to study 'hem. Mischiefes feed
Like beasts, till they be fat, and then they bleed.

(V.xii.146-51)

But as if he realized that the tone has become too dark, our feelings too heavily wrenched against *Volpone* and *Mosca*, Jonson restores the grounds of detachment. "*Volpone*" steps completely out of the play and addresses us directly:

The seasoning of a play is the applause.
Now, though the Fox be punish'd by the lawes,
He, yet, doth hope there is no suffring due,
For any fact, which he hath done 'gainst you;
If there be, censure him: here he, doubtfull, stands.
If not, fare iouially, and clap your hands.

After all, it is only a play; we need feel no concern. Considered in its poetic effect, this final speech indicates unmistakably the difficulty it is designed to overcome. It is no mere formal epilogue, as the similar speech in *The Alchemist* very largely is. Without it, *Volpone* lacks a note necessary to its harmonic resolution; but in order to provide it Jonson has had to step outside his action.

The last act of *The Alchemist* also suggests that Jonson recognized the problem and this time determined to meet it in dramatic terms. Whether he succeeded or not is at least rather more difficult to decide than with the earlier play. Certainly, *The Alchemist* as a whole does not probe to the depth of *Volpone*. And one small reason for this may well be the way Jonson presents the moral judgment in Act V. At the end of the previous act, Lovewit returns to the house the rogues are abusing, with the suddenness of a divine judge:

DOL: Yes, but another is come,
You little look'd for!
FACE: Who's that?
DOL: Your master:
The master of the house....
FACE: We are vndone, and taken.
DOL: Lost, I'am afraid. (IV.vii.107 ff.)

FACE: bethinke you,
Of some course sodainely to scape the dock:
For thether you'll come else. Harke you, thunder.
(V.iv.135-37)

In the last act, Lovewit does execute the necessary judgment by stripping and dismissing the gulls with the appropriate moral comment. On the other hand, Jonson manages to preserve to the end the comic mood so largely dependent on our partial sympathy with the vitality of the rogues. Subtle and Dol are allowed to escape by the skin of their teeth, and Face is pardoned. It appears at first sight a solution to the problem raised by Volpone. Yet the cost is very high.

There is something of a *deus ex machina* about Lovewit.¹⁸ His judgment is only partial in that it spares Face. What is more, his pardon of Face seems contingent on acquiring the material spoils—including the ripe, rich widow. His symbolic judgment is qualified by a suspicion about his motives. In the theater this would probably pass, and the epilogue spoken by Face reminds the audience, explicitly but effectively enough, of its own engagement in the follies enacted. Nevertheless, the ambiguities of Lovewit's role do leave a doubt whether Jonson quite succeeded even here in realizing his deepest moral convictions in the dramatic terms of comedy.

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¹⁸ See Bacon, p. 145. Partridge, pp. 152-56, argues, however, that Lovewit is himself one of the objects of Jonson's ironic satire, and that Face's epilogue is an (unconsciously) self-betraying judgment on the rogues. True though this may be, it hardly meets all the issues involved.

STYLE AND *TRISTRAM SHANDY*

By J. M. STEDMOND

When the literary critic considers the tradition to which a work belongs in order to determine the underlying conventions which help to shape it, he usually has questions of genre in mind. But there are, of course, still more fundamental factors which impose conventional order on a work of literature—the very patterns of the language in which it is written. This aspect has never been neglected in poetry, since poetic language is so obviously not prosaic. But the “style” of prose works of the imagination is rather more difficult to deal with. The customary procedure in stylistic analysis is to detect deviations from the “norm” and then to try to relate these to the personality of the author and thus in turn to throw light on his work as a whole. “Le style” and “l’homme” are still, as a rule, the main factors in the stylistic equation.¹ The critic seeks for signs of individuality, using as his measure, very often, a rather impressionistic version of what is “normal.” The conclusions derived from this more or less intuitive approach to matters of style depend largely on what the critic considers to be “normal” usage in the particular period in which the work under consideration was written.

The prose style of Laurence Sterne offers an interesting case in point. H. D. Traill, writing about Sterne, says:

To talk of “the style” of Sterne is almost to play one of those tricks with language of which he himself was so fond. For there is hardly any definition of the word which can make it possible to describe him as having any style at all. . . . He was determined to be uniformly eccentric, regularly irregular, and that was all.²

Traill’s opinion was published shortly after the end of the nineteenth century. Just before that century began, in 1797 to be exact, Thomas Wallace expressed the belief that Sterne’s manner “was merely the style of an individual,” displaying an eccentricity close to affectation, and therefore little suited to be “generally adopted by English prose writers.”³ These two expressions of opinion reflect, not unfairly, what seems to have been the dominant attitude toward Sterne’s “style” throughout the nineteenth century. Sterne’s prose style was often admired, but it was admired for its oddity or individuality. Hazlitt

¹ Here, for example, is a recent pronouncement by a well-known authority on English prose style: “It is the voice that we try to hear, the tenor of speaking and writing, the being of the man behind the intellectual meaning, the being that created the object just so and not otherwise. That perhaps is the final endeavor of criticism. . . .” Bonamy Dobrée, “Some Remarks on Prose in England Today,” *Sewanee Review*, LXIII (1955), 631-46.

² *English Prose Selections*, ed. Sir Henry Craik (London, 1903), IV, 207-208.

³ *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, VI (Dublin, 1797), Part II, p. 70, quoted by Elizabeth L. Mann, “The Problem of Originality in English Literary Criticism, 1750-1800,” *PQ*, XVIII (1939), 97-118.

called it "the pure essence of English conversational style," but he did not hold it up as a model for written prose.

We are frequently told that ours is the era of the spoken word—that, in fact, our new media of communication will soon quite displace written language—and certainly the temper of critical opinion concerning Sterne's style has altered in this century. Virginia Woolf still praises the "jerky disconnected sentences" because they are "as rapid and it would seem as little under control as the phrases that fall from the lips of a brilliant talker"; she still admires the "very punctuation" because it is "that of speech, not writing, and brings the sounds and associations of the speaking voice in with it"; but then she adds a significant comment: "The order of the ideas, their suddenness and irrelevancy, is more true to life than to literature."⁴

In his book on *Modern Prose Style*⁵ Bonamy Dobrée commends Sterne for keeping up "the spoken tradition," despite the trend in the opposite direction so evident in Gibbon, Burke, and Smollett. Dobrée seems to see in Sterne the only great writer of the latter part of the eighteenth century still able to "write naturally as the mind would wish to utter," because, like the moderns, he sought to prevent literature from interposing itself between him and life. *Modern Prose Style* was written twenty years ago, when the "stream of consciousness" was at its flood. Dobrée was not unaware of the art involved in writing an "artless" style, but he was still able to talk glibly of Dr. Johnson doing his best "to model his conversation on his writing," rather than "trying to write as he naturally spoke."

However, if Sterne's style is "conversational," so, in a sense, is that of most other eighteenth-century prose stylists⁶—Addison and Swift, for instance, based their style on that of the cultured gentleman. The eighteenth century was the great age of letter-writing, a form which depends on blurring the distinction between conversation and written prose.⁷ Among the novelists, Fielding adopted the manner of the familiar essayist; Richardson chose the letter as his natural medium; and Sterne carried the trend still further by making his novels into a running conversation between writer and reader. His conversational style, however, is certainly neither Johnsonian nor Addisonian.

Robert Burton's description of his own "extemporean style" in the *Anatomy of Melancholy* as composed "out of a confused company of notes, and writ with as small deliberation as I do ordinarily speak" may very appropriately be applied to Sterne's writings. The way in which "borrowings" from writers such as Bacon and Burton melt into the matrix of *Tristram Shandy* with scarcely a ripple does, in

⁴ *The Common Reader*, Second Series (London, 1932), p. 79.

⁵ (Oxford, 1934), pp. 215-16.

⁶ Cf. James Sutherland, "Some Aspects of Eighteenth-Century Prose," in *Essays on the Eighteenth Century Presented to David Nichol Smith* (Oxford, 1945), pp. 94-110.

⁷ Cf. Donald Davie, *Purity of Diction in English Verse* (London, 1952), p. 13.

fact, indicate a certain kinship between Sterne's diffuse sentence structure and the "anti-Ciceronian" period so popular in the seventeenth century.⁸

Morris W. Croll distinguishes two main types of anti-Ciceronian style: the "curt" and the "loose," with the aphoristic *style coupé* forming the core of the "baroque" reaction against the overelaborate Ciceronian periods so common among Renaissance prose stylists.⁹ Among the most notable features of the curt period are the lack of syntactic connections between main clauses and the fact that the idea of the whole period is contained in the first clause—the advance thus being not logical, but rather in a series of new expressions of the concept first stated. The description, early in Volume I of *Tristram Shandy*, of Parson Yorick's journey through his parish astride his horse, is an excellent example of the curt period:

Labour stood still as he pass'd,—the bucket hung suspended in the middle of the well,—the spinning-wheel forgot its round,—even chuck-farthing and shuffle-cap themselves stood gaping till he had got out of sight. . . . (I, x)

But this is only part of a longer, looser construction. More typically Sternean is the following version of what Croll refers to as the "loose" period:

But I was begot and born to misfortunes;—for my poor mother, whether it was wind or water;—or a compound of both,—or neither;—or whether it was simply the mere swell of imagination and fancy in her;—or how far a strong wish and desire to have it so, might mislead her judgment;—in short, whether she was deceived or deceiving in this matter, it no way becomes me to decide. (I, xv)

Syntactic links are provided, but they connect no lucid and coherent train of logic. The narrator seems intent to give the impression that he is jotting down his thoughts just as they come into his mind, together with any parenthetical asides which they suggest. The loose period expresses even better than the *style coupé* the anti-Ciceronian prejudice against formality of procedure and the rhetoric of the schools. It obtains its characteristic effects by using syntactic links, such as relative pronouns and subordinating conjunctions, which are,

⁸ Sterne did not commence writing his books until he had reached his mid-forties, the writing of sermons having made up a major portion of his previous literary production. Just how much his mature manner was influenced by the years of subjection to the discipline of pulpit oratory is difficult to ascertain. His published sermons, most of which were probably composed prior to 1751, contain unmistakable indications of the later Shandean style (Lansing Hammond's *Laurence Sterne's Sermons of Mr. Yorick* [New Haven, 1948] reveals how much Sterne was influenced by seventeenth-century divines such as Tillotson); but letters written by him in 1739 (the first extant examples of his prose), not long after his ordination as a priest, betray the same tendency toward diffuseness and loose sentence structure, as does also his first venture into prose fiction, the allegorical *History of a Good Warm Watch-Coat* which appeared in January, 1759.

⁹ Cf. "The Baroque Style in Prose," *Studies in English Philology*, ed. Malone and Ruod (Minneapolis, 1929), pp. 427-56. Also articles by Croll in *SP*, XVIII (1921); *Schelling Anniversary Papers* (1923); and by George Williamson in *MP*, XXXIII (1935), and *PQ*, XV (1936); also Williamson's book, *The Senecan Amble* (Chicago, 1951).

logically, strict and binding, to advance the idea, and yet, at the same time, it relaxes at will the tight construction which they seem to impose.¹⁰

Tristram's "good-humoured, Shandean style," written, he claims, "one half *full*,—and t'other *fasting*," often seems almost a parody of the baroque period. Here is a passage from Volume VI, for example, in which the loose style is unmistakably caricatured:

I told the Christian reader—I say *Christian*—hoping he is one—and if he is not, I am sorry for it—and only beg he will consider the matter with himself, and not lay the blame entirely upon this book,—

I told him, Sir—for in good truth, when a man is telling a story in the strange way I do mine, he is obliged continually to be going backwards and forwards to keep all tight together in the reader's fancy—which, for my own part, if I did not take heed to do more than at first, there is so much unfixed and equivocal matter starting up, with so many breaks and gaps in it,—and so little service do the stars afford, which, nevertheless, I hang up in some of the darkest passages, knowing that the world is apt to lose its way, with all the lights the sun itself at noon day can give it—and now, you see, I am lost myself!— (VI, xxxiii)

All the tendencies inherent in the loosely linked, "trailing" period are here carried to the extreme, with the inevitable result—utter confusion.

The samples of Sterne's style quoted so far from *Tristram Shandy* are statements made by the narrator; in other words, they are selections from the "opinions" rather than the "life" of Tristram. While the "opinions" make up an important segment of the book, they are not the only part in which the anti-Ciceronian style is used. The speeches of Tristram's father, for instance, are often Senecan in form.¹¹ The following passage is an example of this vein in Mr. Shandy:

—The act of killing and destroying a man, continued my father raising his voice—and turning to my uncle *Toby*—you see, is glorious—and the weapons by which we do it are honourable—We march with them upon our shoulders—We strut with them by our sides—We gild them—We carve them—We in-lay them—We enrich them—Nay, if it be but a *scoundril* cannon, we cast an ornament upon the breech of it. (IX, xxxiii)

In the later sections of *Tristram Shandy*, examples similar to those so far quoted are noticeably less characteristic of the style. There is a trend toward shorter sentences, a greater proportion of dialogue and narrative, a more homogeneous structure. These tendencies culminate in *A Sentimental Journey* in which the anti-Ciceronian period is almost completely assimilated into the general fabric of the narrative.

¹⁰ It is the style of Bacon (especially in *The Advancement of Learning*), the later Montaigne, La Mothe le Vayer, Sir Thomas Browne, the letters of Donne, Pascal's *Pensées*. But the loose style is seldom found in a "pure" state. Almost invariably it is mingled and interwoven with the curt period.

¹¹ This is quite in character, since his is a scholastic mind, as Bacon observed, "as was said of Seneca, *Verborum minutius rerum frangit pondera*; so a man may truly say of the schoolmen, *Quaestionum minutius scientiarum frangunt soliditatem*." *Philosophical Works*, ed. J. M. Robertson (London, 1905), quoted by Williamson, *PQ*, XV (1936), 329.

The apparent negligence of the anti-Ciceronian period, the casualness of its construction, resulted from a definite philosophic concept on the part of its first masters. Like many seventeenth-century thinkers, they were much concerned with the relation between thought and language. Certainly, in examining their own thought processes, they would become aware of the artificiality of the Ciceronian period as a means of expressing the passage of ideas through the mind. Implicit in their choice of a looser style is the belief that the act of experiencing an idea is part of its truth, and that the words in which it is expressed must retain this ardor of conception if they are to convey any real meaning to another mind. Thus they deliberately sought the moment when the truth was still imagined, when the idea first objectified itself in the mind, when the parts still possessed an independent vigor of their own. As has been often pointed out in recent years, Sterne was concerned with the "streams of consciousness" of his narrators, Tristram and Yorick.¹² If it is the thinker's mind which the anti-Ciceronian stylists seek to express, this is Sterne's aim also. But previous users of the style were mainly concerned with their own thoughts; Sterne applied their method to the delineation of the thought-streams of at least semifictional characters.

Like most eighteenth-century writers of fiction, Sterne learned much from the great exemplars, Rabelais and Cervantes. But he alone among the English novelists of the period seems to have caught and fused something of the attitudes toward language of each of these masters. Of course he knew them mainly through translations, but in versions which carried forward into English much of the spirit of the originals.¹³

Certainly most of Rabelais' stylistic traits were faithfully copied by his first translator, Sir Thomas Urquhart. *Gargantua and Pantagruel* is essentially an attempt to synthesize the world of obsolescent scholasticism, superstition, and chivalry with that of Renaissance humanism. In one sense it is an effort to explore the external limits of a rapidly expanding physical and intellectual world. The prose style ranges from the idiom of taproom chatter to the eloquence of the Ciceronian period. Rabelais takes every possible liberty with prose conventions: variations of word order, parallel lists of nouns or adjectives, repetitions, interruptions, parentheses. The bulk of the work is written in the colloquial manner; the rhythms are those of everyday speech. But the range of Rabelais' vocabulary is immense,

¹² He was not, of course, a "stream of consciousness" writer in the modern sense. As Melvin Friedman puts it: "In spite of all this complexity and digression *Tristram Shandy* is an extreme simplification of consciousness revealed in the heat of its feverish activity." *Stream of Consciousness: A Study in Literary Method* (New Haven, 1955), p. 31.

¹³ Rabelais in the Urquhart-Motteux translation: Books I and II (Urquhart), 1653; Books III, IV, and V (Urquhart-Motteux), 1694. The standard eighteenth-century edition, and the one used by Sterne, was that revised and annotated by John Ozell (published six times from 1737 to 1843). Sterne probably read Cervantes in the translation of Shelton (1612), but Jervas' translation appeared in 1742 and Smollett's (from the French) in 1755.

and he delights in synonyms. Often he seems to prefer associating words by sound rather than sense, to begin with a scheme of word formation and then proceed almost mechanically.

Sterne's verbatim borrowings from Ozell's Rabelais have often been noted,¹⁴ and they serve to illustrate the similarity between the manners of the two writers in such matters as the manufacture of names and words, lengthy word-catalogues, groupings of parallel words and constructions, ellipses, occasional inversions of word order, and so on. Both Sterne and Rabelais use language very self-consciously, like raconteurs who are also listeners to their own words. There is, however, in Sterne no sense of the autonomy of the word. His coinages are mainly playful, they are never exploratory thrusts into the unknown. In Rabelais, there is a sense of richness, of the Renaissance urge to encompass all knowledge in its grasp. His use of language is generously expansive; Sterne's is critically selective.

Rabelais' style has been described as the orchestration of ideas: an idea is passed through two or more different vocabularies, as a musical theme is taken up by different instruments. Modern commentators on Cervantes have stressed what Spitzer calls his "perspectivistic" attitude toward his material.¹⁵ He uses words neither as an expansion of "life," like Rabelais, nor as depositories of "truth," like the medievalists. His attitude is most clearly reflected in the instability and variety of the names he gives to his characters, as if he desired to show the different aspects under which they may appear to others.¹⁶ In part, of course, this toying with names is a satirical thrust at the pseudo-historicism of the chivalric novels which Cervantes was burlesquing, with their learned references to many sources. But also he was allowing his critical intelligence to play with medieval philosophical ideas concerning names.

The importance attached to names in the Bible (particularly the names of God, and the change of name subsequent to baptism) led the medieval etymologist to trace direct relationships between words vaguely associated because of their homonymic ring. He sought edifying ideal possibilities as evidence of the working of the divine in the world. Cervantes uses the same device to reveal the inherent ambiguity of words when viewed from different perspectives. He coins names and puts into them meanings other than those conceived of by the characters themselves. His treatment of common nouns affords another example of this approach. Characteristically he allows two linguistic standards to clash—standards determined mainly by social status. This is chiefly exemplified in the give and take between

¹⁴ Cf., for example, Huntington Brown, *Rabelais in English Literature* (Cambridge, Mass., 1933), *passim*.

¹⁵ "Perspectivism in 'Don Quijote,'" in *Linguistics and Literary History* (Princeton, 1948), pp. 41-85.

¹⁶ Before adopting his knightly title, Quixote bore the name Quixada, or it might have been Quesada, or (and according to Cervantes more possibly) Quixana. Sancho Panza's wife is called sometimes Juana, then later Mari, and still later Teresa.

Sancho and his master, though there are many other examples. The same linguistic "perspectivism" is revealed in his tolerant attitude toward dialects and jargons, and his liking for puns.

Sterne shares much of Cervantes' "perspectivism." One of Mr. Shandy's pet theories is concerned with the magic power of names, and Sterne leaves no doubt about the Cervantean parallel:

The Hero of *Cervantes* argued not the point with more seriousness,—nor had he more faith,—or more to say on the powers of Necromancy in dishonouring his deeds,—or on DULCINEA's name, in shedding lustre upon them, than my father had on those of TRISMEGISTUS or ARCHIMEDES, on the one hand,—or of NYKY and SIMKIN on the other. (I, xix)¹⁷

All of Sterne's writings are permeated with a sense of the relative nature of language; ambiguities have an endless fascination for him. As a humorist, he makes much use of double-entendre. He is always conscious of the shades of meaning which may reside even in such innocent seeming words as "nose" and "whiskers," and he derives a great deal of amusement from the stock device of replacing a possibly indelicate term with a row of asterisks, often pausing after the hiatus to offer several interpretations of the gap.

Puns and double meanings emphasize the unstable nature of language, its dynamic qualities which are so difficult to control. One can never really be sure of saying what one means. This is the aspect of words that Sterne never forgets. And he does not restrict his awareness of it merely to the conventional forms of communication. He is extremely conscious of the part which gestures and exclamations play in supplementing and refining the meaning that words alone fail to convey. Sometimes a grunt proves more expressive than a paragraph, but even an exclamation can mean different things to different people, as in the case of Phutatorius' cry of "Zounds!" at the canonical dinner. Posture and gesture, of course, provide a subtle supplementary language, and Sterne, possibly influenced by the drama (he was a great admirer of Garrick) or more probably through his experience in the pulpit, takes great pains to keep his readers aware of the manner in which his characters deliver their speeches.

But the writer cannot escape the tyranny of words, even though he uses them to describe gestures. Sterne differs from most other eighteenth-century novelists, however, in that his mind is fixed as much on the word as on the idea which he is seeking to express. Language is not merely raw material which he, as artist, must shape; it is also a problem to be analyzed and discussed. It is a character in

¹⁷ Examination of an autograph manuscript of the first portion of *A Sentimental Journey* which is preserved in the British Museum (Egerton MSS 1610) reveals something of Sterne's own concern with names. He has carefully revised his pseudonym for Smollett from *Smeldungus* to *Smelfungus*, not, however, in order to render it less objectionable, but rather so that *Mundungus*, used in the same chapter, should not seem too repetitious. His name for Yorick's servant he amends from *Le Fleur* to *La Fleur*, allowing the exigencies of grammar to triumph over the imponderables of sex.

its own right, both subject and object, telling the story and being told about.

Sterne adapts the styles of Rabelais and Cervantes to his own purposes. Rabelaisian effects occur mainly in passages attributed to Tristram, and help to individualize him as a character—distinguishing him, for instance, from Yorick, the narrator of *A Sentimental Journey*. Thus it is mainly the externals of Rabelais' style which find their way into *Tristram Shandy*. The influence of Cervantes, on the other hand, goes somewhat deeper. Sterne's whole skeptical and critical attitude toward language is, in fact, very much in accord with the temper of *Don Quixote*. Even his toying with Rabelaisian "galimatias" is infected by it. He never allows himself to be carried away by a burst of Gargantuan exuberance, but always steps aside in time to join in the general laughter at such ridiculous caperings. Thus Sterne manages a sort of amalgam of the styles of Cervantes and Rabelais, producing a use of language which has echoes of both, but is, in the final analysis, different from either.

There is considerable similarity between the critical approach of Cervantes and the skeptical philosophic attitude underlying the "baroque" anti-Ciceronian period. Baroque aesthetic is characterized by a liking for polar mixtures, and thus approves of bold verbal figures such as the pun, the oxymoron, the paradox, the metaphor linking seemingly alien spheres, as well as such ingenuities as anagrams, acrostics, and poems shaped like obelisks or Easter wings.¹⁸ In a way, then, one might say that Sterne inherited more than merely the general pattern of his prose style from the "baroque" seventeenth century. He certainly shows a predilection for "polar mixtures," for "bold verbal figures" such as the pun and the paradox (double meanings in a word or phrase); the aposiopesis (meaningful silence); the apostrophe (digression to aid progression). Such rhetorical devices seem to attempt, after a fashion, to contrive a synthesis of irreconcilables. And so, in a manner, does the "perspectivistic" approach to language. One might almost, in fact, class Sterne's whole aesthetic attitude as "baroque," in the sense in which that term is applied to seventeenth-century literature.¹⁹

One of the outstanding characteristics of anti-Ciceronian prose is

¹⁸ D. W. Jefferson notes a suggestion of F. W. Bateson's that Sterne's use of typographical devices such as blank, blackened, and marbled pages, wriggly lines, asterisks, and so on, might be a parody of seventeenth-century "shaped" poems. "*Tristram Shandy* and the Tradition of Learned Wit," *EC*, I (1951). Austin Warren has made the point that George Herbert's "Altar" and "Easter Wings" are really attempts to visualize the objects they signify and are thus analogous in principle to onomatopoeia; the principle being "the expressive adjustment of structure, phonetic or typographical, to theme." *Rage for Order* (Chicago, 1948), p. 31. Sterne's attempts to graph the lines which his narrative had followed in various volumes might be considered a playful extension of this principle. And he refers to the marbled page as the "motly emblem of my work," thus at least raising associational ideas of the emblem poems of Quarles and Withers.

¹⁹ While noting Sterne's affinities with seventeenth-century traditions, one should not overlook his obvious connections with his own century. As D. J.

its refusal to follow the logical, step-by-step processes of formal grammar. Great seventeenth-century prose stylists, such as Jeremy Taylor, Sir Thomas Browne, and John Milton, often make use of devices which are generally considered "poetic." Their sentences do not lead on from point to point, allowing the reader to assimilate the phrases as he goes, but often must be re-read and synthesized into complex wholes, much in the way that is required in the reading of a poem. The writer of fiction, no less than the poet, is an artist in words. He uses his medium in a more dilute form, but, though the concentrations vary from writer to writer, his final aim, like that of the poet, is a synthesis. Most commonly the novelist collaborates with time and tells his story more or less chronologically, but sometimes he joins the poet in his struggle to abrogate time. The closer his art approaches to the poet's, the more use he makes of poetic techniques such as figures of speech, verbal repetition, or leitmotifs, even alliteration. His object is the same as the poet's—to reinforce unity of impression in order to assist the reader to synthesize rather than analyze.

In a sense, the ordinary English sentence, with its subject-verb-object movement, has a "plot"—it "goes" somewhere. The modern poet often endeavors to avoid this "normal" relationship, just as the modern novelist and short-story writer often dispense with conventional plot. The object of the poet, presumably, is to revivify for us (and himself) an area of human experience. Like the novelist, he is seeking a sort of hyperrealism, though the effort to present a "slice of life" is more obvious in the work of the prose writer. Many modern writers, then, try to escape from the atrophy of convention into a fresh awareness of the nature of reality, at the same time attempting to impose some form on that "reality."

Sterne seems to share the twentieth-century distrust of artifice, though, of course, he is also part of the eighteenth-century movement away from the rigid conventions of society back to the unspoiled art of the noble savage. But language is itself rigidly conventional—it has to be in order to function effectively in a society. In attempting to keep himself and his reader aware of the compromises necessary in all forms of verbal art, Sterne inevitably subjected his artistic medium, language, to critical scrutiny. Paradoxically, in so doing, he was, in fact, adopting well-established conventions of the previous century.

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Greene observes in "Logical Structure' in Eighteenth-Century Poetry," *PQ*, XXX (1952), 315-36: "As, in the novel, *Tristram Shandy* only emphasizes the tendency noticeable in *Clarissa*, *Joseph Andrews*, and *Roderick Random*, in *The Spiritual Quixote*, *The Man of Feeling*, and *The Adventures of a Guinea*, toward a small thread of plot supporting an enormous weight of comment, digression, and episode, so in poetry the frank impressionism of *The Seasons* and *The Task* only carries to a perhaps slightly higher degree that delight in 'faggotting notions as they fall' that we find in *The Hind and the Panther*, *The Dunciad*, and *London*, in *The Spleen*, *The Pleasures of Imagination*, and *Night Thoughts*."

FRANK NORRIS AND THE WEREWOLF OF GUILT

By STANLEY COOPERMAN

The naturalist novel has been too easily and too often associated with scientific determinism. It is, of course, quite true that at the turn of the century the concept of nature-as-power captured the imagination of American novelists and shaped many of their attitudes. It is also true, however, that Darwinism—the objective view of natural force—underwent a unique modification in the United States. Here the new science did not shatter the foundations of traditional faith, as it did in England, but rather was absorbed by it. Calvinist or Puritan determinism, a powerful force in America during the 1890's, found in scientific determinism a psychological ally, compounding the ancient dualism between nature and sin, on the one hand, and spirit and purity, on the other. Writers were not emancipated from the Puritan flesh-hate and guilt which had long boiled beneath the surface of the American mind; they were, even while using the new scientific terminology, binding themselves tightly to the older patterns of guilt and fear.

The duality between flesh and spirit, evil and purity, is the basis of American naturalism, and this, to a great extent, accounts for the failure to schematize the work of novelists such as London, Dreiser, Norris, and Hemingway. Critics have tended to take the Darwinian sloganeering and worship of "essential maleness" at face value, and so have failed to account adequately for the sentimentality, the romance, the panicked brutality, narcotic action, and essential ascetism of the American naturalist movement.

Frank Norris, as perhaps no other major figure among naturalist writers, combines all of these elements. Romance has been noted in London, sentimentality has been pointed out in Dreiser, and action-as-narcotic is obvious enough in Hemingway. In the work of Frank Norris, however—especially in *McTeague* and *Vandover and the Brute*,¹ his first two novels—these elements combine with a torturous sense of guilt and masochism. The result in both books is psychic disease and destructive ambivalence.

It is, of course, all too easy to impose motivations on a defenseless author according to the way he fashions his book. A novelist, after all, is identified with but certainly need not be identical to his characters; their conflicts are not necessarily his, and the attempt to equate them is always dangerous and often inaccurate. When, however, the author intrudes upon his narrative to explain events according to his

¹ All references to text are from the *Complete Works* (New York: Doubleday, Doran, 1928); *Vandover* is Vol. V; *McTeague*, Vol. VIII.

values rather than the values and judgments of his characters, when he substitutes moral explanation for dramatic presentation, we can legitimately examine these intrusions (no matter what we may think of them in terms of craft) for valuable insight into the personal motivations of the author. Such is the method I have used in reaching the following hypothesis.

Frank Norris, in *McTeague* and *Vandover*, was motivated far more directly by Calvinist-Christian guilt than by scientific naturalism; the naturalism, indeed, was superimposed upon the older determinism only on the verbal level. It is Norris himself who assents to the "higher morality" of society even while exposing its contradictions and hypocrisy; it is Norris himself who explains the downfall of his characters in terms of original sin (the beast in all flesh as flesh) uncontrolled by work, will, or faith; and it is Norris himself who is torn between affirmation of "purity" and masochistic fascination for the physical, setting up the duality between "nature" (evil) and "spirit" (good). Finally, it is Norris who sees, as "nature," the deadly sins of sloth, gluttony, wrath, avarice, envy, and—most horrible, most animal, most destructive of the spirit—lechery.

Norris completed *Vandover* in 1895 and *McTeague* in 1897, although most of the latter had already been done before the novelist left California. Although *Vandover* was not published until 1914, twelve years after the death of Norris and fifteen years after the publication of *McTeague*, both books were written during the same formative period; Norris had taken his degree at the University of California in 1894 and had gone on to Harvard for advanced work.

The fact that *Vandover* was conceived in the older, aristocratic, and more consciously aesthetic environment of Harvard had, undoubtedly, much to do with the nature of the book, which is basically a portrait of sensitive adolescence and young manhood in an upper-class, moneyed environment. *McTeague*, on the other hand, fits neatly into the usual middle-class, lower-class pattern of Western naturalism; it contains more violence, melodrama, and sordidness. Together the two books form Norris' morality-play of good *vs.* evil, the ancient problem of fleshly (natural) sin and spiritual purity—a preoccupation which Norris was to overcome in his later novels (as did many of the naturalists) by a determined study of social and political power, or by creating, in *Blix* and *Moran*, an asexual pattern of "love" between men and women who are essentially chums purified by action.

Vandover is unique in American naturalist fiction in that the flight from sex, the fear of the "male brute," is undisguised by the adventures of either a muscle-bound or muscle-brained hero. For Norris, the individual can save himself from the brute in any of three ways: acting so that the brute cannot arise; destroying or mastering its vehicle (the woman) when it does arise, subduing the vehicle's desirability and sexuality; or idealizing the vehicle so that nothing of the brute (sexuality) remains at all. There must be either work, will,

or innocence; action which prevents desire, "virility" which breaks desire, or childishness which transforms desire into purity shaped as mother-sister love. Any relaxation of will, any self-consciousness, any lethargy or failure to become a worker, a master, or a child, must produce disaster. Such disaster is, precisely, the fate of McTeague and of Vandover. McTeague is destroyed because sloth ends his mastery over Trina, and Marcus' treachery prevents him from anaesthetizing himself with work; Vandover becomes the brute because in a failure of will he consciously succumbs to it, betraying his innocence.

In both books "the brute" is a central figure; Norris, as narrator, cringes from the slightest stirring of sexual desire. The brute, to be sure, is "nature," but it is also sin, and this is precisely the point at which Norris parts company with science, ostensibly the basis for every good naturalist's view of human behavior. The scientist, objectively viewing the mechanism of natural impulse, recognizes neither evil nor good, but rather a vast intermeshing of force patterns. The naturalist sees evil, if he sees it at all, as a result of society repressing or falsifying these natural impulses, twisting them into unnatural channels where they must be either destroyed or degraded. Since instincts by definition cannot be destroyed, the ultimate result—unless natural impulses are frankly recognized and sensibly channeled—is either perversion or hypocrisy.

Norris, despite his "naturalism," believes that the instinct itself is evil and that sexual desire—when the individual fails to shatter or sugarcoat it—is the antithesis of "higher nature," of "innocence," of "purity," and of "goodness." Thus Norris tells us that Trina, before her marriage to McTeague, is "healthy" because she is "without sex as yet." Thus Turner tells Vandover to be "his better self"; thus the brute in Vandover feeds on "all the good things" in him. Nature, furthermore, is cast not in terms of science, but rather in terms of original sin. The narration, at the point where McTeague is fighting his impulse to seduce Trina, is religious rather than objective; there is revulsion, self-sickening, and horror, a vision of Satan himself, complete with brimstone:

Dimly he seemed to realize that should he yield now he would never be able to care for Trina again. . . . Across her forehead, her little pale forehead, under the shadow of her royal hair, he would surely see the smudge of a foul ordure, the footprint of the monster. It would be a sacrilege, an abomination. (pp. 26-27)

The passage is cast within McTeague's mind, although one can justifiably doubt whether he would be capable of any such thought. Almost immediately, however, Norris drops even the pretense of objectivity, and we see McTeague's horror as Norris' own, as he invokes and protests the merciless determinism of original sin:

But for all that, the brute was there. Long dormant, it was now at last alive, awake. From now on he would feel its presence continually; would feel it

tugging at its chain, watching its opportunity. Ah, the pity of it! Why could he not always love her purely, cleanly? What was this perverse, vicious thing that lived within him, knitted to his flesh?

Below the fine fabric of all that was good in him ran the foul stream of hereditary evil, like a sewer. The vices and sins of his father and of his father's father, to the third and fourth and five hundredth generation, tainted him. The evil of an entire race flowed in his veins. Why should it be? He did not desire it. Was he to blame? (p. 27)

In *Vandover*, Norris' Calvinist nightmare receives its most complete statement, ultimately developing into that ancient dramatization of spirit *vs.* flesh, the legend of the werewolf. As a young, innocent adolescent, Vandover comes across a picture of childbirth, and with this knowledge of evil his fall begins:

Then little by little the first taint crept in, the innate vice stirred in him, the brute began to make itself felt, and a multitude of perverse and vicious ideas commenced to buzz about him like a swarm of nasty flies. (p. 8)

The perversion, however, lies not in the "ideas" themselves (which for a boy of Vandover's age are normal and natural), but rather in the perversion with which he approaches these ideas; the image of flesh as evil is itself the distortion which sets up Vandover ripely for his guilt and final degradation. It is in Norris' direct narration that the contradiction is most evident. When Norris tells us that "the animal in him, the perverse and evil brute, awoke and stirred" (p. 24), he gives us the basic tension of the novel: the conviction that nature is itself a perversion, a concept altogether meaningless in any but religio-ascetic terms.

The brute, however, while "natural," has his domain in the flesh, and therefore wars against Vandover's "finer spirit." This struggle is dramatized by the werewolf theme of the novel; like the tradition from which it springs, it is the product of religious dualism. The brute, again in terms of religious dualism, cannot be indulged—it must be starved; cannot be fed reasonably—it must be destroyed, or it devours the feeder and his reasons together. Vandover makes the fatal error of attempting compromise with "the desire for vice, the blind reckless desire of the male" (p. 24), and feeds the brute:

The brute had grown larger in him, but he knew that he had the creature in hand. He was its master, and only on rare occasions did he permit himself to gratify its demands, feeding its abominable hunger from that part of him which he knew to be the purest, the cleanest and the best. (p. 25)

When Vandover learns of the death of Ida Wade, a flighty girl whom he had seduced, the reaction sets in: he confesses to his father, awaits judgment, and is forgiven on condition (largely self-imposed) that he will do penance, that he will become "manly" by fighting the "perverse, blind and reckless desire of the male" (p. 181); in short, that he will subdue the brute by mortifying the flesh. Thus when he meets the desirable Grace Irving on board ship during his "journey into the wilderness," and is shocked to find that he is tempted to renew

their acquaintance, he thrusts her aside as a representative of Satan ("I don't want to have anything to do with you"), presses down the brute of natural life, and renders his own ruination inevitable.

After being shipwrecked while returning to San Francisco, where he finds his father dead, Vandover sets out independently—and fashions his own doom. He looks for an apartment, and must choose between a luxurious one with a poor studio, or a modest one with a fine studio. The conflict is between sloth and labor; at this crucial point, deprived of the guidance of his father, Vandover can be saved only by work. Which apartment will he select? Vandover at first struggles, chooses virtuously (while all readers breathe a sigh of relief), but changes his mind at the last moment, deciding upon luxury and succumbing to sloth and gluttony.

The importance of this period in Vandover's life is the fact that—as in *McTeague*—sloth is once again the entering wedge for the brute. Vandover dissipates time, and from this it is only a step to dissipation of the flesh:

A new life now began for Vandover, a life of luxury and aimlessness. . . . But Vandover made another fatal mistake: the brute in him had only been stunned; the snake was only soothed. His better self was as sluggish as the brute, and his desire of art as numb as his desire of vice. It was not a continued state of inaction and idleness that could help him, but rather an active and energetic arousing and spurring up of those better qualities in him still dormant and inert. (p. 157)

Vandover, however, finds himself an outcast from society because of his almost forgotten sin against purity in the rather shallow person of Ida Wade. He attempts to save himself by painting—by his work—but it is too late; the brute once again has the upper hand, its way smoothed by sloth, and Vandover returns to debauchery. Finally, at the opera, he sees a vision of childhood, innocence and purity. He makes one last attempt, through work, to subdue the brute—which has now grown so powerful that it threatens to devour the "good Vandover" entirely:

To be better, to be true and right and pure, these were the only things that were worth while, these were the things that he seemed to feel in the music. It was as if for the moment he had become a little child again. . . .

. . . The other Vandover, the better Vandover, drew apart with eyes turned askance, looking inward and downward into the depths of his own character, shuddering, terrified. Far down there in the darkest, lowest places he had seen the brute, squat, deformed, hideous; he had seen it crawling to and fro dimly, through a dark shadow he had heard it growling, chafing at the least restraint, restless to be free. For now at last it was huge, strong, insatiable, swollen and distorted out of all size, grown to be a monster, glutted yet still ravenous. . . .

. . . Little by little the brute had grown . . . its abominable famine gorged from the store of that in him which he felt to be the purest, the cleanest, and the best, its bulk fattened upon the rot and decay of all that was good. . . .

He had remembered his art, turning to it instinctively as he always did when greatly moved. This was the one good thing that yet survived. It was the strongest side of him; it would be the last to go; he felt it there yet. It was the one thing that could save him. (pp. 187-88, 192)

The attempt to escape the werewolf fails. Vandover's art is gone, eaten by the brute:

It was as if the brute in him, like some malicious witch, had stolen away the true offspring of his mind, putting in their place these deformed dwarfs, its own hideous spawn. . . . It was gone—his art was gone, the one thing that could save him. . . . At some time during those years of debauchery it had died, that subtle, elusive something, delicate as a flower; he had ruined it. (p. 201)

Ultimately Vandover himself becomes the brute in a striking and memorable passage as disturbing as a surrealist poem, as guilt-ridden as a Calvinist vision.

In both *McTeague* and *Vandover*, Norris presents the antithesis of the brute, the "pure" love which is either presexual (childish) or postsexual (senile), the fragile, delicate state at either end of the emotional rainbow. In *McTeague* we have, as contrast to the fall of McTeague and Trina (the latter corrupted by lust, natural sin—in Norris' terms—of the male, and subsequent victim of the lesser sin of avarice), the fleshless sentimentality of the relationship between Old Grannis and the dressmaker:

They sat there side by side, nearer than they had ever been before. . . . Timid, with the timidity of their second childhood, constrained and embarrassed by each other's presence, they were, nevertheless, in a little Elysium of their own creating. They walked hand in hand in a delicious garden where it was always autumn. . . . (p. 149)

In *Vandover* we have the clean, boyish Turner and the home life of the Ravises (replete with family prayers, backgammon after dinner, and evenings-at-home). The wide-eyed, maidenish Haight and the "pure" Turner are presented in unmistakable terms as ideals of Norris himself. The ideal, however, rings false despite Norris' panicked affirmation; ultimately Vandover, the doomed artist, is an adult while Haight is an infant; Flossie is a living woman while Turner is a pompous adolescent. Haight, indeed, seizes the opportunity of Turner's disaffection with Vandover to court her on the rebound, "feeling like a little boy." His first proposal to Turner is especially notable:

"You see, you are the only girl I ever knew very well—the only one I ever wanted to know. I have cared for you the way other men have cared for the different women that come into their lives; as they have cared for their mothers, their sisters—and their wives. You have already influenced me as a mother or sister should have done; what if I should ask you to be—to be the *other* to me, the one that's best of all?" (p. 72)

The net effect, despite Norris' repeated use of "purity" and "goodness" in his narrative, is one of disgust. One cannot, after all, help but feel a certain revulsion against a man who insists upon taking to his marriage bed only that woman who reminds him of his mother or sister. There is, within this "purity," an odor of unhealth, a morality itself condensed into perversion. In treating this ideal, however,

Norris makes no indictment; he praises the purity and emphasizes the goodness. Vandover as the artist may rebel against such unnatural purity, but in his rebellion he falls beneath the weight of the brute which infests all natural relationships. His ruin is due not to the unnatural repression of natural instincts, but rather to his toleration of them; he fails to subdue the brute by work, will, or innocence, the traditional bulwarks of religious morality against the terrors of religious determinism.

I would like to suggest that the scientific orientation so often ascribed to Norris as a "naturalist" writer has been overemphasized. Although Norris and the American naturalist movement as a whole did absorb scientific determinism, this was done in terms of previously existing religious pressures. It is the imposition of Calvinist determinism on the newer scientific material that produced the unique coloration of American naturalism in patterns of romance and brutality, degradation and purity, realism and rhetoric.

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THE LABYRINTHS OF JORGE LUIS BORGES AN INTRODUCTORY TO THE STORIES OF *THE ALEPH*

By L. A. MURILLO

Jorge Luis Borges is the outstanding writer of Spanish America today. He is best known abroad as the author of fantastic and ingenious short stories that are in their own enigmatic way the translucent expression of the spiritual crisis of the twentieth century. Of the several volumes of his short stories, the most varied and perhaps the most significant is *El Aleph*.¹ The stories of *El Aleph* comprise a very small book; but, as the title implies,² the little book is like a rare glass, strangely cut and painfully polished down by its author, to serve like the glass of a timeless telescope for probing the immense extent of the human past, and then, and at the same time, as a cosmic glass to be used for microscopic insight into the human present. A little book with an outrageous ambition for its size. But its contents are extremely interesting; they are the latest and best example of Borges' gifts as a storyteller.

The fabric of Borges' stories is many-threaded and many-colored. Behind the fabric, like a skeletal structure, stands one idea, expressed consistently through a variety of images: the labyrinth. The labyrinth is one of the most mysterious and one of the oldest representations of the inner life of man. Like the circle and the cross, it is a symbol that expresses, through geometrical balance, a unity of opposites. The simplest image of the labyrinth is a coil, a swirl.³

¹ Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1949; second edition, 1952. Quotations are from the second edition. This article on *El Aleph* is an abbreviated version of a paper read before the New England Chapter of the AATSP at the Modern Language Center, Harvard University, in January, 1957. Other collections of short stories by Borges are: *Historia universal de la infamia* (1935), *El jardín de senderos que se bifurcan* (1941), *Ficciones*, 1935-1944 (1944), *La muerte y la brújula* (1951). A complete and up-to-date bibliography on Borges may be found in the excellent study by Ana María Barrenechea, *La expresión de la irrealidad en la obra de Jorge Luis Borges* (Mexico City, 1957). A partial bibliography may be found in *Cuentos de Jorge Luis Borges*, Monticello College Edition (Godfrey, Ill., 1958).

² The book takes its title from the final story, "El Aleph," in which the narrator (Borges), under extremely problematical conditions, sees the *Aleph*, a concept of space that contains all the others, hence, all of creation and all of the universe. Borges is, of course, exploiting the cabalistic nature of the term in order to achieve a multiplicity of possible connotations. See J. L. Ríos Patrón, *Jorge Luis Borges* (Buenos Aires, 1955), p. 101, n. 8; and for a brief discussion of the mystical and symbolic meanings ascribed to letters in the medieval Kabbalah, J. Abelson, *Jewish Mysticism* (London, 1913), pp. 98-106.

³ W. H. Matthews, *Mazes and Labyrinths; A General Account of Their History and Developments* (London, 1922), contains descriptions of the many kinds of labyrinths and their uses up to the present. It is more than probable that the labyrinth coil (or design) and the spiral symbol are related in several ways, in the manner of performing ritual dances, for instance. D. A. Mackenzie, *Migration of Symbols and Their Relations to Beliefs and Customs* (New York, 1926), has a full study on the spiral but does not relate it to the labyrinth coil.

From the earliest times this coil has been identified with the magical powers that man has aspired to possess and to control. In our present socialized life the most common picture of it would be a fingerprint. How strange it is to think that we bear upon our fingertips a coil, a "labyrinth," that identifies us impersonally and almost infallibly to state agencies and detective bureaus. Anthropologists have been amazed to discover the wide extent of the knowledge of the labyrinth among primitive peoples. One of the most curious instances is that of a New Zealand tribe whose men tattoo on their faces a series of labyrinthine coils.⁴ "Quizá en mi cara estuviera escrita la magia . . .," says the magician-priest in the story "*La escritura del Dios*" (p. 108).

As a first step into the labyrinth of Borges, it will be necessary to keep in mind the details of the classical myth of Theseus and the Cretan labyrinth. This is the labyrinth which was built by Daedalus on the orders of King Minos and which housed the Minotaur (a king-beast). The Athenian youth entered the labyrinth as one of a group of young people who were to be sacrificed to the man-bull; with the help of Ariadne's thread he was able to make his way out after slaying the monster. There are two additional points that should be kept in mind: first, the Cretan labyrinth is an artifice, an ingenious creation of intelligence and of art, and as a corollary, the way to its center (and the way out) is easily accessible to its author, or to anyone who has the "key," the right directions; second, the labyrinth houses a king-monster to whom a certain number of victims are sacrificed at intervals.

According to the best information, the earliest labyrinths in Egypt, from whom the Cretans borrowed the idea, were temples, which were later used as burial places for kings.⁵ In such a temple the Egyptian priest performed a ritual in which the king, and then eventually a beast-god substituted for the king, was killed that the power of life might be reborn. The religious beliefs of the ancient Egyptians required that the dead king be provided with treasures or provisions for life after death. Much later, when Egyptian culture was in decline, the temple-tombs of the kings were designed with intricate and secret passages, in order to protect the dead kings and their treasures from thieves. Eventually the labyrinth would be built to lure the reckless and the fearless into its corridors, to thwart them, and to put an end to them. These labyrinths were devised by men like Daedalus, the ingenious artificer, or by builders and designers boastful of their skill to bewilder and to confuse.

At this point the reader of Borges will recognize the relevancy

⁴ Karl Kerényi, *Labyrinth-Studien, Labyrinthos als Linienreflex einer mythologischen Idee* (Zürich, 1950), illus. 5.

⁵ C. N. Deedes, "The Labyrinth," in the volume *The Labyrinth: Further Studies in the Relation Between Myth and Ritual in the Ancient World*, ed. S. H. Hooke (London, 1935), pp. 3-42.

of all this to the fantasy of *The Aleph*. The labyrinths of Borges are constructed with just such material, infinitely detailed. The following group of propositions or generalizations may serve as a key to this labyrinth of labyrinths. (1) The entire universe is a labyrinth, and the inner life of man, the self, is a labyrinth. (2) The person moving toward the center of the labyrinth, the victim to be sacrificed, the victim being drawn into the net-trap, is equal in identity to the killer waiting in the center. (3) The ingenious designer of the labyrinth will fall a victim to his own creation; that is, he will be punished for his pride. (4) The victim and the killer are one and the same person. (5) These two opposite movements or tensions that come to a meeting point and annul one another are the drama of the self, its desires, its will, and its death.

Each of Borges' stories contains one or several variations of the labyrinth theme. In *The Aleph* it is not overly difficult to make out the nucleus of images that Borges uses for the labyrinth: the plan of a city, the sands of the desert, a spider web, a flaming pyre, and the dream state. These are the simplest images, and to simplify the discussion further, we will consider each in turn, illustrating it by reference to one story in this order of increasing complexity.

"No precisa erigir un laberinto, cuando el universo ya lo es. Para quien verdaderamente quiere ocultarse, Londres es mejor laberinto . . ." (p. 120). The modern city, like a hive of a million beings dependent upon one another, is a man-made labyrinth. For Borges, almost any geometrical detail, a corner, a line, or even a window pane, is an allusion to the labyrinth of the universe that men, in spite of their cleverness and their originality, will imitate.

The story "Emma Zunz" takes place in Buenos Aires. Emma is a nineteen-year-old girl who takes upon herself the task of avenging the unjust death of her father. As she moves through the brothel district of Buenos Aires in search of a stranger who will serve as an instrument of justice, her figure is flashed and distorted in the labyrinth of bright mirrors that reflect her nervous movements; as she moves through the streets of Buenos Aires on her way to shoot Loewenthal (her employer who is guilty of the crime her father was convicted of), she has become a fallen woman moving toward the center of a labyrinth where her fate will be inextricably bound to that of her victim, to the center where her efforts to execute divine justice will be thwarted.

In the story "The Two Kings and the Two Labyrinths"⁶ the desert of infinite sands is the labyrinth of the universe, and the perplexing, scandalous structure built by the architects and magicians of the king of Babylon is its blasphemous imitation by man. The king of Babylon, wishing to mock the simplicity of his guest, the

⁶ This story is properly to be read as part of "Abenjacán el Bojarí, muerto en su laberinto," but Borges does not present it as one of his own original stories. See the note to the Epilogue of the second edition, p. 157.

king of Arabia, asked him to go into his labyrinth. The king of Arabia implored divine aid and found the way out. When he returned to Arabia, he gathered his armies and laid waste the kingdom of Babylon; he captured the king, tied him on a swift camel, and took him out to the desert. There he said to him:

"¡Oh, rey del tiempo y substancia y cifra del siglo!, en Babilonia me quisiste perder en un laberinto de bronce con muchas escaleras, puertas y muros; ahora el Poderoso ha tenido a bien que te muestre el mío, donde no hay escaleras que subir, ni puertas que forzar, ni fatigosas galerías que recorrer, ni muros que te vedan el paso."

Luego le desató las ligaduras y lo abandonó en mitad del desierto, donde murió de hambre y de sed. La gloria sea con Aquel que no muere. (pp. 124-25)

In the story "Abenjacán el Bojarí, muerto en su laberinto" the labyrinth image is the spider web. The king Abenjacán, a tyrant of an African desert tribe, so oppressed his peoples that they rose against him, and he was forced to flee for his life. He escaped with Zaid, his cousin and Visir. This is the first version of the events that followed. One night in the desert the two fell asleep, and a slave kept watch. "Esa noche creí que me aprisionaba una red de serpientes. Desperté con horror; a mi lado, en el alba, dormía Zaid; el roce de una telaraña en mi carne me había hecho soñar aquel sueño" (p. 116). Then the king took a knife and slit the throat of his cowardly Visir.

In a kind of death rattle, Zaid uttered some strange words that the king was unable to make out; later he understood them to mean this: "*Como ahora me borras te borraré, dondequiera que estés*" (p. 117). In order to forestall this threat—from a dead man (who was a coward)—Abenjacán (but not Abenjacán, rather Zaid, as we learn later) made his way to England and built there, in Cornwall, on a height overlooking the sea, a reddish labyrinth of many corridors leading to one central chamber, where he hid with the slave and a lion and, supposedly, a treasure that he had managed to salvage.

Here we have a classical tale of the labyrinth: a king in a kind of tomb with a lion to help him guard the treasure. But the builder of the labyrinth is Zaid who has pretended to be Abenjacán; that is, he has identified himself with the man he wishes he were. The man in the center of the labyrinth, then, is not the king, but a man who has disguised himself, identified himself with the king, in order to kill him.

But here is the second (and the true) version of what happened that night in the desert. That night the manful king slept and the cowardly Zaid kept watch. "Dormir es distraerse del universo y la distracción es difícil para quien sabe que lo persiguen con espadas desnudas. Zaid, ávido, se inclinó sobre el sueño de su rey. Pensó matarlo, pero no se atrevió" (p. 122). Zaid fled with the treasure and the slave and made his way to England. Eventually, and as Zaid expected, the king tracked him down. Zaid hid in the center of the labyrinth and waited, and when the king appeared, he shot him from

a trap door. Then he defaced the king, the slave and the lion, to make identification impossible, to insure his own identity as Abenjacán.

Two young Englishmen, a poet and a mathematician, have told us this story. The king was slain in a labyrinth that his double built to trap him, and the double, unworthy of him, left him, a faceless corpse, in the labyrinth now become a tomb. "Simuló ser Abenjacán, mató a Abenjacán y finalmente *fué* Abenjacán. —Sí... Fué un vagabundo que, antes de ser nadie en la muerte, recordaría haber sido un rey o haber fingido ser un rey, algún día" (p. 123). The ironical ending is complete, of course, only when we understand that once the king is dead, there can be no identity for the living Zaid. He is simply a nobody. His fate was intimately bound, through envy, hatred, and fear, to Abenjacán's.

Borges ends his stories on this level of rather thin-sliced irony. Each of the stories in *The Aleph* will disclose to the careful reader a similar design marvelously worked out. The few details discussed here can only suggest the symmetry, the geometrical balance of opposites, and the evasive dialectic of Borges' art. An arabesque design, like that of the *Thousand and One Nights*, transposed into the intellectual terms of the Occident, would be one way to describe this art of combining fantasy and metaphysics.

The identity of opposites is the theme of another little masterpiece, "The Theologians," in which the labyrinth is a flaming pyre. Aureliano and Juan de Panonia form, together, a prototype. Both are sixth-century warriors of the pen in the front ranks of Christ. Juan is the object of Aureliano's envy and hate and later becomes his victim. As theologians, Aureliano is the orthodox defender of the Christian revelation, accuser and inquisitor. Juan is the heretic and the scapegoat, a theologian unjustly accused and convicted by his rivals of professing unorthodox opinions. Religious dogma is fervor of doubt and fervor of faith, a tension of opposites that need and complete one another.

The dazzling treatises of Juan aroused first the envy and then the animosity of Aureliano. Juan was so successful in his attacks upon the heretical belief in cyclical, ever-returning events and personalities that he brought about the condemnation of the heresiarch Euforbo, who was tied to the stake and set afire. Euforbo shouted from within the flames:

Esto ha ocurrido y volverá a ocurrir. No encendéis una pira, encendéis un laberinto de fuego. Si aquí se unieran todas las hogueras que he sido, no cabrían en la tierra y quedarían ciegos los ángeles. Esto lo dije muchas veces. (p. 36)

The coiling flames are the labyrinth in which the orthodox and the powerful will lose their way among the passions that impel their dogmas, only to end up in the center of the labyrinth that is their fate.

Aureliano sees these flames many years later as they curl and mount around the wretched figure of Juan, whom he denounced on

the basis of a single sentence taken out of context from one of those brilliant treatises. "Aureliano no lloró la muerte de Juan, pero sintió lo que sentiría un hombre curado de una enfermedad incurable, que ya fuera parte de su vida" (p. 42). Once Juan is dead, Aureliano bears no identity; he has no incentive, no cause to live for. Death comes to him by fire, in a flash of lightning.

El final de la historia sólo es referible en metáforas, ya que pasa en el reino de los cielos, donde no hay tiempo. Tal vez cabría decir que Aureliano conversó con Dios y que Éste se interesa tan poco en diferencias religiosas que lo tomó por Juan de Panonia. Ello, sin embargo, insinuaría una confusión de la mente divina. Más correcto es decir que en el paraíso, Aureliano supo que para la insondable divinidad, él y Juan de Panonia (el ortodoxo y el hereje, el aborrecedor y el aborrecido, el acusador y la víctima) formaban una sola persona. (p. 43)

Una sola persona . . . Borges, here, is evidently pointing to the meaning of his story. This rhythmic movement of characters through the labyrinth of their lives to the consummation of their selves reproduces, in a kind of psychic allegory, the dramatic ritual of the slaying of the king. The self begins by identifying its desire and its free will with the annihilation of the rival, and then it may or may not discover that in doing so, it was not acting according to its desire and its freedom, but in accordance with a law, a dialectic of life, that converts individuals into prototypes. This psychic rhythm, we might say, is the swirling of anguish in the ritual killing of the self.

In "The Theologians" the self, Aureliano, found release in death and the hereafter. There is only one story in *The Aleph* in which the self attains a superior identification that provides a new life: "La escritura del Dios," the most fantastic, most intricate of Borges' stories. Its close is a climax of multiple suggestions and ironical significations.

The tale is as intricate as an infinite dream. The labyrinth of the universe appears in two forms: the deep, circular cell in which the magician-priest Tzinacán is imprisoned, and the design of spots on the skin of the jaguar or tiger which has been put into the other half of the cell and which the priest can see for only a few seconds a day (at noon, through a grating, by the light of a small round hole in the high ceiling) when the jailkeeper lets down food and water for both the prisoner and the tiger. Written somewhere on the tiger is the scripture of the god. Whoever knows and utters this magical sentence is immortal and all powerful.

When Pedro de Alvarado came upon the sacred pyramid of Qaholom, he laid waste to it and tortured its magician-priest because he refused to reveal the location of a treasure. "Me laceraron, me rompieron, me deformaron y luego desperté en esta cárcel, que ya no dejaré en mi vida mortal" (p. 107).

This happened many years ago, when he was young. During the tortuous nightmare of his imprisonment beside the jaguar, he recalled the traditional belief that his god had written a magical sentence some-

where in the universe. With the power that the sentence would give him he would kill the Spaniards and restore the religion of his god. It was inevitable, within the circumstances of his prison life, that he should conclude that this sentence was written there on the jaguar's skin; and through the years, as he aged, as his mind grew darker and his spirit weakened, he began to grasp an order in the lines that he could see only for a few seconds through the grating that separated him from the jaguar's jaws—a labyrinth studied through a labyrinth.⁷ The effort drained away his mind and his will.

Un día o una noche—¿entre mis días y mis noches qué diferencia cabe?—soñé que en el piso de la cárcel había un grano de arena. Volví a dormir, indiferente; soñé que despertaba y que había dos granos de arena. Volví a dormir; soñé que los granos de arena eran tres. Fueron, así, multiplicándose hasta colmar la cárcel y yo moría bajo ese hemisferio de arena. Comprendí que estaba soñando; con un vasto esfuerzo me desperté. El despertar fue inútil; la innumerable arena me sofocaba. Alguien me dijo: *No has despertado a la vigilia sino a un sueño anterior. Ese sueño está dentro de otro, y así hasta lo infinito, que es el número de los granos de arena. El camino que habrás de desandar es interminable y morirás antes de haber despertado realmente.*

Me sentí perdido. La arena me rompía la boca pero grité: *Ni una arena soñada puede matarme ni hay sueños que estén dentro de sueños.* Un resplandor me despertó. En la tiniebla superior se cernía un círculo de luz. Vi la cara y las manos del carcelero, la rodaja, el cordel, la carne y los cántaros.

Un hombre se confunde gradualmente, con la forma de su destino; un hombre es, a la larga, sus circunstancias. Más que un descifrador o un vengador, más que un sacerdote del dios, yo era un encarcelado. Del incansable laberinto de sueños yo regresé como a mi casa a la dura prisión. Bendije su humedad, bendije su tigre, bendije el agujero de luz, bendije mi viejo cuerpo doliente, bendije la tiniebla y la piedra.

Entonces ocurrió lo que no puedo olvidar ni comunicar. . . . (pp. 109-10)

. . . the mystical union with God. He saw a wheel (circle) of water and of fire that contained the meaning of the universe. It was then that he finally deciphered the tiger script.

But the man who now understands the divine plan of the universe is no longer the man who sought to decipher the script in order to avenge himself.

Que muera conmigo el misterio que está escrito en los tigres. Quien ha entrevisto el universo, quien ha entrevisto los ardientes designos del universo, no puede pensar en un hombre, en sus triviales dichas o desventuras, aunque ese hombre sea él. Ese hombre *ha sido él* y ahora no le importa. Qué le importa la suerte de aquel otro, qué le importa la nación de aquel otro, si él, ahora, es nadie. Por eso no pronuncio la fórmula, por eso dejo que me olviden los días, acostado en la oscuridad. (pp. 111-12)

⁷ Here Borges is contrasting the horizontal labyrinth of the moving jaguar and the vertical labyrinth of the cell (stone) and the grating. The labyrinths may refer to organic and inorganic matter respectively. The circumstances under which the magician-priest deciphers the script suggests the working conditions of the modern scientist who seeks knowledge for its power or for its own sake. I believe that J. L. Ríos Patrón (pp. 39-45, and "El laberinto de Borges," *Sur*, n. 233 [1955], pp. 75-79), in an otherwise penetrating discussion, does not appreciate sufficiently the very complex nature of Borges' labyrinthine irony.

The self has undergone a death and a rebirth. But the ironical circumstances in which the mystical union is attained and the script of the god deciphered annul the positive power of the birth experience. Is the decision to withhold uttering the magical sentence a divine revelation, or is it the self-delusion of a helpless prisoner overcome by a kind of delirium? The new birth of the self proves to be a denser, more perplexing labyrinth, and what was apparently a way out of one labyrinth turns out to be only another corner, and then a forking into another labyrinth whose existence the reader of Borges will not have anticipated.

As a representation of the inner life of man, the labyrinth has always symbolized man's insecurity in the world and his attempts to propitiate, control, or possess the powers that seemingly decide his destiny. Wherever the labyrinth has had a religious significance, as in ancient Egypt and Babylon, its center was likened to the center of the world, and the possession of the power it signified, to a participation in the actions of a divinity. The tortuous and secret way to its center was the initiatory phase of a ritual. In modern literature the labyrinth has no such religious significance. It is indeed a symbol of man's insecurity and of his efforts to find a center of meaning to his existence, but he is lost within the infinite number of passages that consciousness brings to his awareness.

In the stories of Borges the labyrinth, with all its multiple associations, symbolizes the consciousness of man in our time: his fears, which for all their dreadfulness do not seem to differ much from the ancient fears of primordial man; his frustrated will to power, that more than ever resembles the frustrated conjurations of magical formulas; his helplessness, his anxiety, his dread of death, and, above all, his despair. Not the least ironical point of this little book is that the resources of its highly sophisticated and esoteric art, the ingenuity and exotic erudition of its author, have as their purpose (in a manner curiously parallel to the "scientific" discoveries of anthropologists and psychiatrists) the revelation of the oldest, most primitive, and most constant despairs of man. From within the hollows of his labyrinths, Borges echoes that postscript of our age by which we manage to survive: not until now has man known himself to be such an odd creature that, in his deepest despair, despair may be a comfort to him.

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PAUL CLAUDEL AND THE SENSORY PARADOX

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In the theater and poetry of Paul Claudel there are so many statements and situations that seem to go against the natural laws of sense perception that they may be considered to comprise one of the important themes of his imaginative work. In this paper I propose to study Claudel's sensory paradox, especially in the light of the concepts and the literary figures he used.

The paradox is often presented epigrammatically, under which condition it is couched in the shorter literary figures, such as oxymoron, epigram, and antithetical and paradoxical statements. Also, whether it be a question of an epigrammatic statement or of a longer situation, within the broad lines of the basic contradiction there seem to be three principal ways in which the natural laws of sense perception are apparently subverted. The following two quotations are examples of the most common of these ways:

"Qu'importe le jour? Éteins cette lumière!
Éteins promptement cette lumière
qui ne me permet de voir que ton visage!"
(Beata, in "La Cantate à trois voix")¹

Ce sont les yeux pendant que je vivais qui m'empêchaient de voir.
(The Stranger, *Sous le rempart d'Athènes*)

For both individuals, factors that are normally aids to perception—light in Beata's case and the very eyes of the blind Stranger—act instead as deterrents to it. Furthermore, a contrary idea is implied, that darkness and blindness would serve to aid their vision.

There is a different type of apparent contradiction in the next two passages.

Parce qu'ils ont entendu ce mot hors du temps dont leur cœur avait besoin.
... (explaining why certain individuals are dissatisfied with life; "Sainte Thérèse," *Feuilles de saints*)

Toutes les créatures à la fois, tous les êtres bons et mauvais sont engloutis dans la miséricorde d'Adonai!

Ignoreraient-elles cette lumière qui n'est pas faite pour les yeux du corps?

Une lumière non pas pour être vue mais pour être bue, pour que l'âme vivante

¹ Quotations from Claudel's poetry and theater are based upon the as yet incomplete *Œuvres complètes* (henceforth *O.C.*), 15 vols. to date (Paris, 1950-1959); for that part of his theater which has not yet appeared in *O.C.*, quotations are based on *Théâtre*, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 2 vols. (Paris, 1947-1948). If a poem used in this paper is classified as part of a collection in *O.C.*, the collection title is supplied parenthetically in the text. The major divisions in the plays (*acte*, *journée*, *partie*) are parenthetically indicated in the text by roman numerals, along with the scene number in an arabic numeral, if there is a subdivision.

y boive, toute âme à l'heure de son repos pour qu'elle y baigne et boive. (The Moon, *Le Soulier de satin*, II, 14)

In "Sainte Thérèse" humans are described as having "heard" an intemporal message, and in the quotation from *Le Soulier de satin* the Moon speaks of "liquid" light. Since temporal terms are properly used only with the temporal, and since light cannot be consumed, in these two cases qualities are ascribed to perception factors—hearing and light—that it is physically impossible for them to have.

A further type of epigrammatic contradiction often found in Claudel is that in which one sense performs the function of another. For example, it might be possible to develop the last quotation in this way: if light is to be consumed, it must be tasted, and thus the sense of taste accomplishes what is usually done by sight. But a more direct example of this type is the statement made by the Emperor's Mother in *Le Repos du septième jour*; sightless in the ordinary sense of the word, she tells her son she is also blind "à cette lumière qui pénètre par les oreilles" (II). Here, it is hearing that assumes the function of sight.

It becomes clear, after an examination of only a few such epigrammatic utterances, that the basis for Claudel's sensory paradox lies in the fact that he allowed himself to discuss the intemporal or spiritual in temporal or physical terms. Furthermore, the object of "physical" perception in these statements—a light, an intemporal message, a liquid, and so forth—are in reality all metaphorical figures for grace. This is substantiated, for example, by "L'Esprit et l'eau" (second of the *Cinq grandes odes*). In the argument of the poem Claudel describes himself as listening in profound silence to "l'Esprit de Dieu qui souffle à cette voix de la Sagesse qui est adressée à tout homme"; and in the poem Wisdom says to him:

Écoute, mon enfant, et ne me ferme point ton cœur, et accueille
L'invasion de la voix raisonnable, en qui est la libération de l'eau et de l'esprit,
par qui sont
Expliqués et résolus tous les liens!
Ce n'est point la leçon d'un maître, ni le devoir qu'on donne à apprendre,
C'est un aliment invisible, c'est la mesure qui est au-dessus de toute parole,
C'est l'âme qui reçoit l'âme et toutes choses en toi sont devenues claires.

A certain contradiction is discernible even here, but it is obvious enough that the voice and the "aliment" in question are both God's grace.

The statement that follows, from *L'Histoire de Tobie et de Sara*, helps explain directly the sense of the first-mentioned type of the paradox.

Celui qui n'a plus de communication avec les apparences passantes et dont les oreilles sont plus accommodées à la confusion immédiate, toutes choses lui sont expliquées fondamentalement, intérieurement comme par le langage des doigts. (Tobie, III, 2)

According to this, the more one can shut out the world, the easier can

one be reached by God's grace; physical light, for example, would serve as a deterrent rather than an aid to the "vision" of grace because it is distracting. However, Tobie's description of how one should receive grace is an impersonal formula by comparison with the following simile expressed through the Emperor in *Le Repos*:

Comprenez la similitude du sommeil:

Celui qui tient son regard fixe cesse d'abord de voir les formes, puis les couleurs, et puis il ferme les yeux,

Et de même l'ouïe cesse de percevoir et puis d'entendre,

Et puis l'odorat meurt; et puis le tact s'éteint,

Et le dernier le goût subsiste, et c'est la saveur de Dieu, la Sagesse par qui la bouche et l'âme s'emplissent de miel et d'eau.

Tout est bien. (III)

This seems to describe the process of achieving a quietistic state through the almost complete dulling of the senses. The first metaphor, whereby God is present as a lingering savor in the mouth, may well be a (perhaps unconscious) reference to the melting communion wafer. It may be noted that Claudel once posed this type of the paradox through a parable, in a negative fashion. In the first version of *La Jeune Fille Violaine* the heroine tells of an ant that, lost at night, asks a glowworm to light its way home. The latter, however, continues to watch vainly the reflection of its own brilliance in a dewdrop (III).

The same poetic license of confusing the temporal with the intemporal is, of course, behind the other two general types of contradiction. If it is not really a question of a physical situation, then perception factors may have physically impossible qualities ascribed to them and the functions of the senses may seem to be confused. Thus, the "light" of grace can be described as a fluid, or can be "listened to."

Two concepts, music and blindness, are especially important to Claudel's sensory paradox because, in addition to their use in many epigrammatic expressions, they also serve as the principal vehicles of the paradox in his theater. Two blind characters have already been mentioned, the Stranger and the Emperor's Mother. However, these two become insignificant when one considers that three leading characters in Claudel's ten full-length plays (counting all versions of a play as one) are or become sightless: the Emperor in *Le Repos*, who returns blind and leprous to life after a visit to the underworld; Violaine in the two versions of *La Jeune Fille Violaine* and in *L'Annonce faite à Marie*,² blinded by her sister in both versions of *La Jeune Fille* and by leprosy in *L'Annonce*; Pensée in *Le Père humilié*, blind from birth. As for music, in one instance Claudel actually personified it—Doña Musique of *Le Soulier de satin*, whose role is minor but nonetheless essential to the play.

On one level, those of Claudel's theater characters who are blind

² The second forms of both *L'Annonce faite à Marie* and *Le Soulier de satin* are not considered or quoted from in this paper; they are essentially abridgments rather than versions.

would tend naturally to propose the paradox in the epigrammatic fashion already discussed. Thus, in the second version of *La Jeune Fille* the heroine says,

Qui donc, en nous, autre que nous-mêmes, a dit *Je?* a dit ce *je* étrange et plus mûr?

Y a-t-il donc chez nous

Quelqu'un? et depuis quand est-il là?

De quelle manière nous faut-il fermer les yeux pour le voir? (III)

Her blindness, therefore, seems to be helping her to "see"—or one could say to "hear"—the mysterious someone. Likewise, the Emperor in *Le Repos* says, in abdicating,

Voici que l'Arbre dynastique a exhaussé sa cime au-dessus du mur,

Et qu'héritier de cent Empereurs en moi je possède la Sagesse!

O richesse de ma possession! je suis aveugle et je vois! (III)

On a second level, Violaine and the Emperor are tools of an allegorical presentation of the paradox, if allegory be defined as a figurative process whereby a pattern of thought originating in its creator's mind is gradually recalled by means of divers figures and other devices. Since Violaine and the Emperor act over periods of time in their blind state, proposing sporadically the sensory paradox in an epigrammatic manner, they are also—and necessarily—involved in an allegory of the same paradox. However, the allegory is in their actions and personalities as well as in their words.

In terms of the paradox, Violaine is (as well as says she is) more "seeing" after she is blinded. This is not evident superficially, insofar as the perfect charity she evinces in the first part of each version is certainly not outdone by her later existence—also perfect—as a holy recluse. Therefore, the improvement in Violaine's state of grace must be in that as a recluse she has achieved finally her true vocation. This is the more subtle meaning of the allegory, as opposed to the paradoxical verities she mouths. The character of the Emperor is by no means as carefully conceived as Violaine's (nor is *Le Repos* a very important play), but it is notable that after his blindness he spends the rest of his life in a manner similar to hers, as a saintly hermit.

Ernest Beaumont, in his *Theme of Beatrice in the Plays of Paul Claudel* (London, 1954), points out that *Pensée* (*Le Père humilié*) is an exception to the general rule about Claudel's principal female characters: she is inspired rather than inspiring. Born blind, she has developed her other senses to a great degree (she speaks to Orian of the sad noise made by "le troisième palmier à notre droite" [I, 3]). It is probably because of her acute intuition rather than any allegorical insight she might possess that Orso can say that in her eyes "il n'y a pas besoin qu'il se forme une image pour qu'ils me voient" (II, 2).

If symbol be that which brings abruptly to mind a concept more important to the argument than itself, then *Pensée* (or her blindness) can be no more than pure symbol in regard to Claudel's theme of the

paradox of the senses, since she herself is not spiritually elevated by her blindness. Furthermore, in the same sense that Mara tells Violaine in *L'Annonce* that "il est facile d'être une sainte quand la lèpre nous sert d'appoint" (III, 3), the stilling of Pensée's passion at the end of the play does not appear to be exemplary even then, since the object of it—her lover, Orian—is now dead. Indeed, one must go outside the text of the play to establish that Claudel meant Pensée to be even a symbol of spiritual "sight." In his *Mémoires improvisés* (Paris, 1954), he told his interviewer M. Jean Amrouche that Pensée est le symbole de ce que j'appellerai l'amour eucharistique. Tout chrétien a des rapports avec Dieu, des rapports d'aveugle, somme toute, puisque nous avons des rapports intimes avec Dieu, aussi intimes qu'ils peuvent l'être puisqu'il s'agit d'une véritable assimilation et, cependant, ces rapports d'amour se font dans la nuit la plus complète, ce que symbolise également Pensée. Pensée est le symbole de l'amour eucharistique.³ (p. 248)

It would follow, then, that blindness in general is a symbol of Claudel's sensory paradox; and while Violaine and the Emperor are parts of an allegory expressing the paradox, they are at the same time symbols of it.

The noiseless trumpets "sounding" in Claudel's plays and poems are one means he used to express his sensory paradox through the concept of music, although he more frequently employed the word "music" directly. In *Le Soulier* Doña Prouhèze's guardian angel tells her where each of them is in space:

Ensemble et séparés. Loin de toi avec toi.

Mais pour te faire pénétrer cette union du temps avec ce qui n'est pas le temps, de la distance avec ce qui n'est pas l'espace, d'un mouvement avec un autre mouvement, il me faudrait cette musique que tes oreilles encore ne sont pas capables de supporter. (III, 8)

It is of the same music that Saint Denys d'Athènes has already spoken, music "que celle de ce monde empêche d'entendre" (III, 1). This other-worldly, "silent" music is, in addition, superabundantly personified by Doña Musique. Besides her name, she carries with her constantly a guitar which, significantly, she never plays, and she has a doveshaped birthmark on her shoulder, a symbol of the Holy Ghost (who bears grace). Furthermore, Claudel had her figure as the mother of John of Austria, who, by virtue of his victory over the "infidel" Turks at Lepanto, was probably considered to be an instrument of God's grace; in effect, while pregnant with her son, she prays that he will be "un créateur de musique" (III, 1). Thus, like Violaine and the Emperor, she presents the paradox epigrammatically, symbolically, and allegorically. More than they, however, she is endowed with the ability to inspire in those around her paradoxical remarks in a vein similar to her own.

³ Half-Jewish, Pensée is also a symbol of Jewry; she says of herself: "Moi je suis comme la Synagogue jadis, telle qu'on la représentait à la porte des Cathédrales, / On a bandé mes yeux et tout ce que je veux prendre est brisé" (I, 3).

The word, the idea, even music itself, are, of course, all Claudelian metaphors for grace. However, with these particular metaphors Claudel sometimes meant grace in a very broad sense. One gains insight into this through a certain musical analogy that Claudel often made in his prose writings, based upon a passage in Ecclesiasticus: "Non impediās musicam" (XXXII, 3).⁴ He suggested that all the world's inhabitants are analogous to the members of a great orchestra, and that it is their duty: (1) to pay attention to their individual parts (i.e., to lead a generally sin-free existence); (2) to keep an eye on the conductor's baton (i.e., to follow God's special wishes for them); and (3) to watch the fellow members of the orchestra (i.e., to practice charity). Avoiding any part of his duty would be, for each player, tantamount to hindering the divine music that is God's grace. In this analogy, music seems to stand for the sum total of grace flowing from God—that is, for universal harmony—as well as for the grace that enters a single individual. Thus, in Claudel's imaginative works audio-musical paradox (but apparently only this type) may have to do with universal harmony instead of, or as well as, individual grace.

When a moral lesson is present in Claudel's sensory paradox, it is clearly antimaterialistic, warning the individual that he cannot receive God's grace if he be overly distracted by the material world. Other than morality, the paradox concentrates upon the workings of divine grace, sometimes in respect to the universe but usually in connection with the individual. Claudel's interest in grace was due, no doubt, to his religious fervor, but another contributing factor was the parallel between the action of grace and that of poetic inspiration. To turn this attraction into a paradox, this was a natural step for him as an artist. The question remains, however, whether, with this and other paradoxes, Claudel's work is more paradoxical than that of most literary artists. At the present time, it usually garners the sweeping description of "metaphorical," but it is perhaps just this that diverts attention from a more specific analysis of his style.

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⁴ See, for example: *Introduction à quelques œuvres*, Les Cahiers des Amis des Livres, 1^{er} Cahier (Paris, 1920), pp. 13-14; *J'aime la Bible* (Paris, 1955), p. 88; "Lettre à madame d'A." in *Positions et propositions II* (Paris, 1934); "Non impediās musicam" in *Les Aventures de Sophie* (Paris, 1937).

CAROLINE AND THE SPIRIT OF WEIMAR

By ROBERT L. KAHN*

While the treatment of a personality of the romantic movement from the point of view of German *Geistesgeschichte* may offend the critical scruples of some reasoned comparativists, there is at least a common meeting ground, if one abstains from using concepts and terms which have become as controversial and abused as the words "romantic" and "classical."¹

In discussing the influence of Herder and Goethe upon Caroline Schlegel-Schelling (1763-1809), the present study will emphasize the characteristics which Storm and Stress, Weimar, and Jena have in common, rather than dwell on their differences. This is partly the result of two realizations: one historical, yet of the future; the other psychological and "aktuell." First, as the later eighteenth century recedes in time, the marked distinctions between these radical movements (all opposed to traditional literary values) become more and more blurred, until finally only one major current can be recognized (with, of course, many individual differences among its authors). Secondly, there is no convenient pure romantic or classical type as such,² but rather a multiplicity of personalities who, to be sure, lean toward, or away from, basic literary ideals, but do so often for the most contradictory reasons (the "naive" Goethe and the "sentimentalische" Schiller may be taken as characteristic examples).

It is my belief that, for all practical purposes, Caroline Schlegel-Schelling should be considered as standing between Weimar and Jena. If an influence must be found, Caroline was probably most indebted to Storm and Stress ideas. But in Caroline's case we note the inadequacy of such definitions as those of Korff, who sees in romanticism the poetization and, therefore, the perfection of classical humanism,³ and of Ruprecht, who calls Jena just another classical movement

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¹ For a thorough discussion denying "German Classicism," see René Wellek, "The Concept of 'Romanticism' in Literary History," *CL*, I (1949), 1-23, 147-72. However, it seems that, perhaps simply for the sake of convenience of arrangement, Wellek in the first volume of his monumental *History of Modern Criticism* (New Haven, 1955) returns to a more conventional practice.

² The principal protagonist of this view is Fritz Strich in his *Deutsche Klassik und Romantik oder Vollendung und Unendlichkeit, Ein Vergleich*, 3rd ed. (München, [n.d.]). For a sound criticism of this opinion, see Josef Körner, *Romantiker und Klassiker: Die Brüder Schlegel in ihren Beziehungen zu Schiller und Goethe* (Berlin, 1924), pp. 7 ff., and Julius Petersen, *Die Wesensbestimmung der Romantik* (Leipzig, 1926), pp. 84 ff., 177.

³ Hermann Korff, *Geist der Goethezeit*, 2nd ed. (Leipzig, 1949), III, 1, 9;

because of its intellectualism.⁴ For, to say it bluntly and, of course, to oversimplify the issue, Caroline was neither as poetic nor as intellectual as these generalizations have implied.

An investigation of Caroline Schelling as an "ideengeschichtliches" phenomenon must show how she absorbed the ideas of Herder and Goethe during her formative phase and even later in Jena (where she was one of the most active members of that Circle), and how she harmonized these trends in her personality. I will discuss at some length her relations with and affinity to Herder, as well as her divergence from his views; then, very briefly, I will treat her proximity to Goethe, and finally, I will consider her position within the Jena Circle.⁵

When August Wilhelm and Caroline Schlegel arrived in Jena on July 8, 1796, Caroline had already—in a manner of speaking—passed through her baptism of fire. The supreme test had been the effects of the French Revolution in Mainz and everything connected with it: Therese Heyne's separation from Forster, Caroline's own surrender to the stirring events, the fateful night with young Dubois-Crancé, her imprisonment at Königstein, her decision to commit suicide if not released soon,⁶ her retirement to Lucka, the birth of her son, her separation from him, and, finally, the death of the child. She arrived in Jena purified and ready for a new start.

Several months after their arrival, the Schlegels visited Weimar for the first time. They were asked to tea at the Herders. Of this visit Caroline writes in her spontaneous and refreshing way:

Wer mich entzückt und fast verliebt gemacht hat, das ist Herder. . . . Madam Herder habe ich mir kleiner, sanfter, weiblicher gedacht. Aber für die fehlgeschlagene Erwartung hat mich der Mann belohnt. Der Curländische Accent stiehlt einen [sic] schon das Herz, und nun die Leichtigkeit und Würde zugleich in seinem ganzen Wesen, die geistreiche Anmuth in allem, was er sagt—er sagt kein Wort, das man nicht gern hörte—so hat mir denn seit langer Zeit kein Mensch gefallen, und es scheint mir sogar, daß ich mich im Eifer sehr verwirrt darüber ausgedrückt habe. Den Mittag drauf waren wir bey Göthe, und Herder auch, wo ich bey ihm und Knebeln saß, allein ich hatte den Kopf immer nur nach Einer Seite. Göthe gab ein allerliebstes Diner. . . . Was ich sah, paßte alles zum Besitzer—seine Umgebungen hat er sich mit dem künstle-

even in his discussion of the *Hochromantik* (Leipzig, 1953), IV, 18-20, Korff insists on his thesis of "Vollendung."

⁴ Erich Ruprecht, *Der Aufbruch der romantischen Bewegung* (München, 1948), *passim*. Against the *Deutsche Bewegung* school, of whom Ruprecht is the most radical, see the general strictures by René Wellek and Austin Warren, *Theory of Literature* (New York, 1949), p. 119.

⁵ This study in no way resembles or is indebted to Gerda Mielke's Ph.D. dissertation, *Caroline Schlegel nach ihren Briefen: Ein Beitrag zur Geistesgeschichte des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Greifswald, 1925), from which it differs in both method and goal: Dr. Mielke relied exclusively on Strich's antipodal terminology. Nor could any use be made of Margarete Susman's *Frauen der Romantik* (Jena, 1931), which accepts Caroline's "Romantikertum" without question.

⁶ The poison may have been obtained through August Wilhelm; see Caroline, *Briefe aus der Frühromantik*, ed. Erich Schmidt (Leipzig, 1913), I, 304. References are to this two-volume edition, unless otherwise indicated.

rischen Sinn geordnet, den er in alles bringt, nur nicht in seine dermalige Liebschaft, wenn die Verbindung mit der Vulpus (die ich flüchtig in der Comödie sah) so zu nennen ist. (I, 410-11)

This passage expresses clearly Caroline's relationship to Herder and Goethe. Both belong centrally in her world, and the affinity which she felt for Herder the thinker and for Goethe the poet is unconsciously demonstrated in her attitude toward their ladies.

Herder's views had broken in upon Caroline with full force in Clausthal, in the somber Harz Mountains, where she lived isolated from her friends and family, and wedded to an unloved husband. In a letter of 1787 Caroline wrote to her sister Lotte that she would worship the latter if she could find a copy of Herder's *Gott* for her. Imploringly she inquired whether it could not be obtained from one of the lending libraries, or whether Arndswald could not lay his hands on it (I, 157).⁷ On September 28 of that year she stated simply, "Herder ist herrlich" (I, 165). Since *Gott! Ein Gespräch* (1787) is the only one of Herder's works which Caroline expressly mentions in her entire correspondence, it will be used as the basic text to demonstrate the similarity of views held by Caroline and Herder, and, incidentally, by Goethe. However, theoretically at least, it does not matter whether Caroline had read one or the other of Herder's works at this period. Caroline was then going through a rather prolonged formative phase,⁸ when rationalistic attitudes were gradually being overcome by a sentimental-emotional outlook. The ideas of Herder and Goethe were widely current throughout her life; diluted or undiluted, they were in the air which the younger literary generation breathed.

The proximity of Herder and Caroline is not only one of ideas, but also of character. Caroline's nature, like Herder's was basically prophetic. Particularly in their youth both spoke and wrote in a rhapsodic style. Both are "Nachtwandler," listening to inner voices, "Lyriker" rather than "Epiker." Caroline's language, like Herder's, is lacking in metaphors; it is colorless, unoriginal, concerned with content rather than form. Yet it is also sincere, spontaneous, subjective. Caroline served as the model for Friedrich Schlegel's Diotima⁹

⁷ Erich Schmidt does not list an Arndswald, nor does Georg Waitz in his edition. This elusive person, however, is mentioned by Heyne in connection with the University of Göttingen Library in a letter dated June 18, 1789: "Von Arndswald ist nun zweiter Curator, ein thätiger Mann." E. Campe, *Zur Erinnerung an F. L. W. Meyer* (Braunschweig, 1847), I, 282. Since Herder refers to his *Gott* in two letters (July 27 and Dec. 6, 1787) to Meyer, a close friend of Caroline in those days, we may assume that Caroline's attention was first drawn to the work by Meyer (*ibid.*, I, 166-68). Caroline's undated letter should probably be assigned to August or September, 1787.

⁸ Even her earliest letters of the year 1788 show traces of Storm and Stress.

⁹ "Über die Diotima" (1795), reprinted in J. Minor, *Friedrich Schlegel, 1794-1802: Seine Prosaischen Jugendschriften* (Wien, 1882), I, 46 ff. Cf. Carl Enders, *Friedrich Schlegel: Die Quellen seines Wesens und Werdens* (Leipzig, 1913), pp. 263-77.

and Schelling's Clara.¹⁰ In the latter work Schelling describes his heroine in terms of an ideal of womanhood, full of charm, delicacy and loveliness, and finally despairs of doing justice to the real "Clara." Similarly, Friedrich, known as an excellent judge of people, once wrote to Caroline,

Ich habe immer geglaubt, Ihre Naturform—denn ich glaube, jeder Mensch von Kraft und Geist hat seine eigenthümliche—wäre die *Rhapsodie*. Es wird Ihnen vielleicht klar, was ich damit meyne, wenn ich hinzusetze, daß ich die gediegene feste klare *Masse* für Wilhelms eigentliche Naturform, und *Fragmente* für die meinige halte. . . . Sie können wohl *Fragmente* sprechen und auch in Briefen schreiben; aber Sie sind immer gerade nur in dem, was ganz individuell und also für unsern Zweck [i.e., the *Athenäum*] nicht brauchbar ist. . . . (I, 439)

In *Gott* Herder is deeply indebted to Neoplatonic ideas, especially to Spinoza and Leibniz, between whom he takes a middle position. It is a book most typical of Herder, though written under the influence of Goethe's studies pertaining to natural phenomena. As a spiritual mirror of these two men at a time when the relationship between them was very close, *Gott* is ideal for a résumé of early Weimar thought. Of greatest importance, perhaps, is the Fifth Conversation of the book, in which Herder summarizes the results of the previous dialogues. Here, an idealized woman, Theano,¹¹ joins Theophron and Philolaus in their pondering of weighty metaphysical questions.

Immediately at the beginning of this dialogue, Philolaus requests Theano to take part in their discussion and, if it should lose itself in empty metaphysics, guide it back to the realm of humanity ("Schau- platz der Menschheit").¹² Herder expresses two basic attitudes: his hostility toward speculative thought and his realistic humanism. In his quarrels with Kant and with the transcendentalists Herder demonstrated adequately his hatred of empty metaphysics. As a humanist, he has faith in man, whom he sees "historisch [,] nicht philosophisch" (VII, 239). Only in facts and realities (V, 570), in a *philosophia anthropologica*, does he find an understanding of human life. Man alone, among all creatures, has a history because he is free and can develop.

Herder's championship of man, his hostility toward speculative thought, and his realistic humanism are fundamental also for Caroline. More than once she confessed not having any aptitude in abstract speculation. In 1799 she wrote to Gries:

Sie wissen, daß ich über diese Dinge ohne irgend eine Kenntniß des philosophischen oder metaphysischen Wortgebrauchs spreche, ja auch viele Bedürf-

¹⁰ [Clara, oder] *Ueber den Zusammenhang der Natur mit der Geisterwelt: Ein Gespräch*, in *Schellings Sämmtliche Werke* (Stuttgart und Augsburg, 1861), IX, 90.

¹¹ See Friedrich's discussion of the historical Theano in his "Über die Diotima," *op. cit.*, p. 53, whose mention in that essay is surely no accident.

¹² *Herders Sämmtliche Werke*, ed. B. Suphan (Berlin, 1877-1913), XVI, 532. References are to this edition throughout.

nisse des spekulirenden Geistes gar nicht kenne, und ich bescheide mich gern, daß nicht alle Gemüther über die Wissenschaft des Unendlichen und Begrenzten so genügsam sind als ich. (I, 549)

Touching are her efforts to follow the highflown thoughts of Schelling, who in his *Clara* of 1810 (in which Caroline is the heroine) often refers to her inability to ponder abstract problems. Caroline's way is that of intuition. This attitude is expressed naïvely in her wistful sigh that Schelling might be able to build some kind of bridge, a sound one, to be sure, from her "caves and mountain tops" to his philosophy. She adds that nothing is easier for her than to stand right there, where reason finds itself (II, 34).

For Caroline, as for Herder, man is important. She wrote at one time that man goes his way and principles go theirs. She exhorted her correspondent not to put her trust in rules, but in people (I, 467). Caroline's interests were primarily anthropocentric: her favorite reading materials were histories, memoirs, and travelogues; her entire correspondence is preoccupied chiefly with problems of society and civilization, always viewed nonspeculatively; after adolescence, her few halting descriptions of nature indicate a lack of closeness to the inanimate world; and her novel, judging from the plan, would have turned into a nonpoetic and historically faithful autobiography.

Caroline's sense of realism is demonstrated clearly in her dislike of Schiller's pathos, for example, when she called his *Maria Stuart* simply imitative and pat objectivity (II, 121), in her judgment of Tieck as belonging to the class of foggy gossips (II, 184), in her opinion of the Brentanos as highly unnatural natures (II, 542), and in her evaluation of Zacharias Werner, whose "love for allegory" led him astray from genuine poetry (II, 512). Friedrich also attests to Caroline's realistic humanism. He asked her to reread his *Studiumsaufsatz* and to tell him how her so very human sense of criticism would judge it (I, 463). He learned that she judged instinctively ("aus dem Gemüth," I, 527). Her true element was life, reality.

The negative attitude of both Herder and Caroline toward abstract speculation, however, does not extend to a hostility toward rational knowledge itself. One of Herder's characteristic tendencies is his insistence on the importance of rationality for the cognition of the divine, on the value of "Vernunft" as such. Thus, he says in *Gott*: "Schließen Sie also von keinem Gefühl, von keinem Genuß den Gedanken aus; er ist uns zum Anschauen Gottes . . . nothwendig . . ." (XVI, 533). This marks his departure from Hamann, who delighted in "feeling" God rather than "knowing" Him, and to whom a "gläubig-offenes Herz" was sufficient proof for the existence of the divine. Herder's basically rational approach to religion led him to attack the mystic belief in a "Weltseele" in *Gott*.

Caroline, too, at least at the beginning, was able to accommodate her religiosity within the confines of a rational world view, such as her father held. Writing from Clausthal in 1786, she disclaimed being

a mystic in matters pertaining to religion (I, 153). At the time of the death of her daughter Auguste in 1800, however, Caroline experienced a change toward "Jenseitigkeit," induced in part by the attention which the Jena group had started to pay to problems of religion. When Novalis announced his second engagement in 1799, Caroline was prompted to reply,

Ich war ruhig im Glauben—denn ich habe doch am Ende mehr Glauben als ihr alle—nicht daß es grade so kommen würde, aber daß sich an irgend einer Brust die Spannung brechen müßte, und das Himmlische mit dem Irdischen vermählen. Was Sie Scheidung zwischen beiden nennen, ist doch Verschmelzung. Warum soll es nicht? Ist das Irdische nicht auch wahrhaft himmlisch? (I, 503)

The passage, which alludes to Novalis' earlier determination to be reunited with Sophie, indicates Caroline's ambivalent religiosity even prior to the death of her daughter. Yet in the same year Friedrich wrote to Schleiermacher about the impression the latter's *Reden über die Religion* had made on Caroline. He stated that she had read the work with great interest and had come to the conclusion that it was a powerful book. According to Friedrich, Caroline accepted all of Schleiermacher's views on religion, the universe, even on divine intercession, but apparently she did not agree to a communication of faith, and, in his own words, "von da an nimmt sie eine retrograde Stellung ein."¹³ On the basis of this statement Erich Schmidt comes to the strange conclusion that "C. war gleich Wilhelm religiös kühl" (I, 736). I disagree with that judgment. Religious coolness is not the issue, anyway. The issue is between a "deistic pantheism" and mysticism. And there Caroline stopped short of the fervor of Novalis and Friedrich.

Like most of the Jena group, Caroline subscribed to Herder's belief in "Palingenesie" or immortality,¹⁴ as we know from Schelling's *Clara*, in which it is the central theme. But we also know that, despite Herder's longing certainty of the "eternal kingdom," he could not countenance the voluntary abandonment of life which Caroline effected in order to be again with her dead child. Upon the death of her mother, one year before her own, she stated, still anthropocentrically, that she felt the fall like the rift of the last close and natural bond between herself and the motherly earth, and she concluded with her favorite Biblical simile of these later years, that we live like the little birds in the trees (II, 515-17). Thus Caroline's letters, which previously had reflected a rational-realistic attitude toward life, now show irrational-irrealistic thoughts about death. Here, in the end, she definitely stands between Herder and Jena.

¹³ L. Jonas and W. Dilthey, eds., *Aus Schleiermachers Leben* (Berlin, 1860-1863), III, 121.

¹⁴ Cf. R. Unger, *Herder, Novalis und Kleist: Studien über die Entwicklung des Todesproblems in Denken und Dichten vom Sturm und Drang zur Romantik*, Deutsche Forschungen, IX (Frankfurt am Main, 1922), 15.

Herder's championship of rationality or intellect, however, when applied in other areas of thought and feeling, finds a constant and strong echo in Caroline. In one of her early letters (written when she was fifteen), she stated, "Glaub es nur, ich bin keine Schwärmerinn, keine Enthousiastinn, meine Gedanken sind das Resultat von meiner, wens möglich ist, bei kalten [*sic*] Blut angestellten Überlegung" (I, 7). This clarity of intellect is reflected in her penetrating judgment of others and is attested by her enemies and friends.

First, the hostile critics: W. von Humboldt told Schiller that Caroline was a very cold but romantic and conceited creature (I, 712), and Schiller wrote to Humboldt that Caroline had great conversational talents (I, 712); Caroline von Humboldt called her a snake (I, 717); Therese confided to Reinhold that Caroline Schlegel had so much intelligence that she had finally become good (II, 643); the aliases "Dame Luzifer" and "Das Übel," by which Caroline was known in the Schiller Circle, show that they at least respected her intellect (II, 646-47).

Her friends' comments tended to be highly laudatory. Mme Schlegel, the mother of August Wilhelm and Friedrich, thought her a most charming and intelligent woman (I, 708); Gries described her as the most intelligent woman he had ever known (I, 727); Steffens saw in her a remarkable and highly intelligent woman (I, 734-35); Friedrich in *Lucinde* spoke of her wit and esprit (I, 658); and, after her death, Schelling characterized her as a unique woman possessed of manly greatness of soul and a keen mind (II, 578), a judgment which agrees with Friedrich's earlier portrayal of her in *Diotima*.

Another indication of the proximity of thought between Herder and Caroline is expressed by Herder in his statement that God has implanted in man attributes of his own being: "Er hat uns darinn etwas Wesentliches von sich mitgetheilet und uns zu Ebenbildern seiner Vollkommenheit gemacht" (XVI, 543). And he wrote to Caroline Flachsland from Strassburg, "Ich glaube, jeder Mensch hat einen Genius, das ist, im tiefsten Grund seiner Seele eine gewisse göttliche, prophetische Gabe, die ihn leitet."¹⁵ The voice of this "Genius" becomes audible in moments of decision.

Caroline unerringly believed in her good "Genius." At the age of sixteen she exclaimed that she had the truly divine consolation of knowing that every kind of fate which would befall her must be beneficial. By relying entirely on God's will, she would never be unhappy (I, 27). Therefore she could resolve all difficulties and conflicts with the outside world, she could harmonize all problems within her personality. She expressed this trust in her fate, in herself, and in her good "Genius" as late as 1801 in the same terms as did

¹⁵ H. Düntzer and F. G. von Herder, eds., *Aus Herders Nachlaß* (Frankfurt am Main, 1856-1857), III, letter dated Nov. 1, 1770.

Herder.¹⁶ To persons not close to Caroline, like Friedrich before he was captivated by her in Leipzig, this unerring instinct seemed bizarre and incomprehensible. Perhaps he felt something of Caroline's mysterious and divine inspiration, but he implies that it was too elusive a quality.¹⁷

We know now that Caroline committed perhaps her greatest blunder when she married August Wilhelm out of a sense of gratitude and against her better judgment, a grievous sin against her inner voice, as Ricarda Huch states.¹⁸ Caroline's faith in herself, in her genius, which Strich assumes to be representative of romantic "Treue gegen die unendliche und schöpferische Liebeskraft" (p. 36), is not romantic in his sense; it is the Storm and Stress trust in one's "Genius," a trust which Caroline expressed from Jena in moving terms. She wrote to Schelling, "Spotte nur nicht, Du Lieber, ich war doch zur Treue gebohren, ich wäre treu gewesen mein Lebenlang . . ." (II, 62). Here, in the area of "Genius," Caroline in practice goes beyond Herder who, because of the attitudes inherent in his clerical training and office, could not countenance her human interpretation and assimilation of his views. Goethe could, and he proved it by his steady, benevolent interest in her.

Another parallel between Herder and Caroline is their approach to the universe and the cosmos. Both see the nature which surrounds man as God's creation (XVI, 554). There is no doubt that for Caroline life and nature are one and that they do not show rends and tears (II, 22).

Yet another similarity between Herder and Caroline is shown in their interpretation of the function of love, although in the application of their views, they necessarily had to differ. Herder expresses his view of love, part of his "Humanitätsideal," in these words:

Wohl dem, der willig folgt [i.e., the force to resemble God], er hat den süßen täuschenden Lohn in sich, daß er sich selbst bildete, obwohl ihn Gott unablässig bildet. Indem er mit Vernunft gehorcht und mit Liebe dient: so prägt sich ihm aus allen Geschöpfen und Begebenheiten das Gepräge der Gottheit auf: er wird vernünftig, gütig, ordentlich, glücklich; er wird Gott ähnlich. (XVI, 563)

Caroline's attitude toward reason has already been discussed; here the phrase "und mit Liebe dient" should be examined. Her ideal is natural and dignified conduct in men (I, 83-84) and dignified behavior in women (I, 85-87). However, she does not, as Weimar tended to do, idealize the social differences of the sexes. Rather she is very conscious, as were the entire Jena group, of the physical differ-

¹⁶ "Die Welt [wird wohl] den Grund ihres Daseyns immer in sich selber haben" (II, 150).

¹⁷ Caroline, *Briefe*, ed. G. Waitz (Leipzig, 1871), I, 341-42.

¹⁸ *Blütezeit der Romantik*, 8th and 9th ed. (Leipzig, 1920), pp. 39-41.

¹⁹ Cf. Schleiermacher's letter to Henriette Herz (Königsberg, Oct. 26, 1802), "Denn nur dadurch [Koketterie] entgehen die Frauen der Erniedrigung, zu welcher sie Fichte verdammt, unthätig zu sein in dem ganzen Prozeß der Liebe

ences, of the fact that humanity consists of both.¹⁹ Never could she agree with Friedrich who in his search for freedom and on the basis of his theories about Greece established his ideal of "Androgynität."²⁰ Caroline lived in the present. A natural woman for her had to be conscious of her womanly charms. On this trait in Caroline her enemies have primarily focused their attention; one has only to read the vituperative letters of the Schiller Circle, where she is judged as a shameless hussy. Herder's injunction—that man will resemble God, if he serves with love—put to use by a woman in the late eighteenth century, could only mean that she abandon herself to love, finding her fulfillment in the love of the one man who is in accord with her.

Love, then, for Caroline meant, above all, serving God. She has given us innumerable statements on the holiness of love. We have only to read her letters to Schelling and to August Wilhelm of the years 1800 to 1803 to see the suffering and the mental agonies she endured as proof of her devotion to God's sanctuary (cf. I, 603). She was not an emancipated woman—none of the women of the Jena Circle were, despite Friedrich's insistence. Rather than quote her views on woman's place, one might simply look at her happiness as Schelling's wife, serving only him, where heretofore she had to guide both Böhmer and August Wilhelm. What Friedrich thought of Caroline as a woman before their estrangement he expressed with touching sincerity in his letters to his brother, to Schleiermacher, Novalis, Auguste, and even to Caroline herself. In his *Lucinde* he writes: "Überhaupt lag in ihrem Wesen jede Hoheit und jede Zierlichkeit, die der weiblichen Natur eigen seyn kann; jede Gottähnlichkeit, und jede Unart, aber alles war fein, gebildet, und weiblich," and he refers to her nature as "ein lebendiger Hauch von Harmonie und Liebe" (I, 658). Strich remarks of Caroline's "Treue gegen die . . . Liebeskraft": "Man nenne diese nicht bequem und egoistisch" (p. 52), and we must agree wholeheartedly to this extent: she was faithful to herself through love; love was a means, the end was God.

To summarize thus far: Caroline and Herder were one in their faith in life. They found on earth, in reality, man's genuine station of action. Not nature, but history, is the key to the grand view, and if nature is included in their way of thinking, it is as a background for man. This outlook was part of Caroline until the time of her great crisis, the winter of 1799 and the spring and summer of 1800. From then on, she was less concerned with reality and gave greater attention to considerations of death and the eternal. Long before this time, however, she had undergone an aesthetic transformation which, to a large extent, was derived from Goethe.

vom ersten Anfang an." Jonas-Dilthey, I, 344. For the Weimar point of view, I rely mainly on Wilhelm von Humboldt's two essays in the *Horen* of 1795. *Wilhelm von Humboldts Werke*, ed. A. Leitzmann (Berlin, 1903), I, 311 ff. and 335 ff.

²⁰ Cf. Friedrich's *Athenäum* essay "Ueber die Philosophie: An Dorothea" in J. Minor, I, 321.

Caroline's relationships with Goethe are well known, and there is no need to discuss them at length. She was from the beginning interested in him as a person (I, 50, 75-76). There was scarcely a greater admirer and more avid reader of his works, as Goethe himself remarked (I, 715). Caroline made the entire Jena Circle Goethe-conscious (I, 494). What is more important, she consciously fashioned herself after his works, not by slavish imitation, but by embracing their spirit. In her earlier period she was not quite sure in her judgment of Goethe (I, 56). But in the full swing of her emotional phase she apparently overcame these qualms, for she quotes *Werther* repeatedly (I, 76, 156, 161, 190). Yet even then her full admiration was reserved for his *Iphigenie*, perhaps because of the obvious similarity between her and the heroine: she was reminded there of her love for her elder brother and her unhappy marriage to Böhmer. Caroline read the second prose version in manuscript form at the age of twenty in 1784 (I, 87). In 1793 Friedrich Schlegel remarked to his brother that Caroline penetrated deeply into whatever she was reading. In this connection he had high praise for her delivery of *Iphigenie*.²¹ For August Wilhelm, too, she was the only interpreter of this work.²² It is no accident that Schelling quotes *Iphigenie* in one of his letters in connection with Caroline's death (II, 582). Symbolically, her two favorite literary works were *Iphigenie* and *Romeo and Juliet* (I, 426-32, 659, 763-64).

One problem arises which concerns Caroline's view of art in relation to life as approaching Goethe's post-Italian ideal. Caroline was basically also an artistic nature; she stated emphatically that there was one thing she did not have to learn, namely, poetry (II, 30). For her, art is not above ethics (I, 367), but it can be above religion, indeed it is religion: "Poesie ist [=] Offenbarung" (II, 147). She had her eyes on Goethe when she exhorted her friends to produce works of art rather than literary criticism.

Nichts [existirt] so wahrhaftig als ein Kunstwerk—Kritik geht unter, leibliche Geschlechter verlöschen, Systeme wechseln, aber wenn die Welt einmal aufbrennt wie ein Papierschnitzel, so werden die Kunstwerke die letzten lebendigen Funken seyn, die in das Haus Gottes gehn—dann erst kommt Finsterniß. (II, 55)

To her friends she was the personification of harmony, as both Friedrich and Schelling testify (I, 657-59; II, 577). Caroline herself recognized a serene lightness ("heitere Helle") as the true element of her nature (II, 26). The catastrophes of her life did not change her, and like a modern Iphigenia she could say,

denk, ich sey dieselbe Frau geblieben, die Du immer in mir katest, geschaffen um nicht über die Gränzen stiller Häuslichkeit hinweg zu gehn, aber durch ein

²¹ O. Walzel, ed., *Friedrich Schlegels Briefwechsel mit seinem Bruder August Wilhelm* (Berlin, 1890), p. 119. See also G. Waitz, I, 350.

²² E. Böcking, ed., *August Wilhelm von Schlegels Sämmtliche Werke* (Leipzig, 1846-1847), VII, 196.

unbegreifliches Schicksaal aus meiner Sphäre gerissen, ohne die Tugenden derselben eingeübt zu haben, ohne Abendtheurerin geworden zu seyn. (I, 299)

This truly Goethean outlook explains also her position within the Jena Circle. At one time Caroline wrote to Novalis,

Ihre übrige innerliche Geschäftigkeit aber macht mir den Kopf über alle Maßen warm. Sie glauben nicht, wie wenig ich von eurem Wesen begreife, wie wenig ich eigentlich verstehe, was Sie treiben. Ich weiß im Grunde doch von nichts etwas als von der sittlichen Menschheit und der poetischen Kunst. . . . Was ihr alle zusammen da schaffet, ist mir auch ein rechter Zauberkessel. (I, 496)

Her predominant interest in *realia*²³ and in her kind of art help explain her negative attitude toward almost all members of the Circle. She criticized them particularly for their reflective bent (II, 233), their lack of objectivity (II, 232), their quarrels (II, 204), and their incomprehensible mystic terminology (I, 517, 625). Friedrich's *Lucinde* did not win her approval at all (cf. I, 511-40), yet out of loyalty she staunchly defended it after it had been published (I, 582-87). Nor was she altogether in favor of the *Athenäum* (I, 473-74).

Goethe recognized a related spirit; he said to Schelling, praising her anonymous review of the performance of *Ion*: "man sehe, es habe ihn jemand ganz *de son propre Chef* gemacht, es . . . herrsche . . . eine reine und schöne Ansicht darin" (II, 297). Caroline's attitude toward the Jena Circle and Goethe is trenchantly demonstrated in her wistful sigh, "Ich wollte, sie [her anonymous "Gemälde-Gespräche"] kämen in die Propyläen," rather than the *Athenäum* (I, 473).²⁴ How far removed from the spirit of Tieck, Friedrich, and August Wilhelm is her statement of 1801: "Es ist eine wahre Wonne um das Verstehen lernen, und das Erleuchten einer dunkeln Vorstellung, und endlich um die Ruhe dieser Vorstellung selbst" (II, 146).

In her aesthetic views Caroline was the child of Weimar and Jena. The synthesis which she represents is beautifully and clearly expressed in a statement in which she reveals her attitude toward the art of the Christian Middle Ages and of antiquity. Caroline's spiritual home was Italy, the home of Winckelmann,²⁵ which she longed to see (II, 364, 377). Yet she loved Renaissance art, particularly Raphael (II, 9-13),²⁶ as did the rest of the Jena Circle. Do we not immediately

²³ See also Schelling's *Clara*, pp. 31, 42, and Friedrich's letter to Schleiermacher, Jonas-Dilthey, III, 103.

²⁴ See Wilhelm's statements on Caroline's principal contributions to "Die Gemälde" in *Sämmtliche Werke*, III, 127-28, and his letter to Goethe, *Schriften der Goethe Gesellschaft*, XIII, 49.

²⁵ Her neoclassical taste is shown in her relations with the painters J. F. A. Tischbein (I, 447-49, 556, 559 *et passim*) and J. M. Wagner (II, 381-83, 534). Cf. also J. Körner, ed., *Krisenjahre der Frühromantik: Briefe aus dem Schlegelkreis* (Brünn, Wien, Leipzig, 1936), II, 134.

²⁶ For a full discussion of Caroline's and August Wilhelm's "Die Gemälde," which appeared in the *Athenäum*, II, No. 1, pp. 39-180, reprinted in A. W.'s *Sämmtliche Werke*, IX, 3 ff., see E. Sulger-Gebing, *Die Brüder A. W. und F. Schlegel in ihrem Verhältnisse zur bildenden Kunst, Forschungen zur neueren Litteraturgeschichte*, III (München, 1897), 44 ff.

recognize Wackenroder's "Ergriffenheit," directed toward medieval as well as Greek art, in the following description of her visit to Söder in 1800?²⁷

Auf Brabecks Schreibtisch steht etwas, wo ich immer wieder hingegangen bin um es anzusehen—ein kleines antikes Stück, ein Altar mit *Basreliefs* mit meinen beyden Händen zu umspannen, und darauf eine in Holz geschnitzte ganze Figur der Mutter mit dem Kinde auf dem Arm, ein Skapulier über denselben hängend, von Albrecht Dürer. Es sieht so braun aus wie Meister Hans und ist eine Spanne hoch. Zum Entzücken schön gearbeitet und gedacht. Wenn wir beysammen gewesen wären, wir würden uns über alle Schicklichkeit hinaus daran ergötzt haben. Brabeck erzählt, ein Engländer . . . hätte ihm eingewandt das sey doch gegen allen Geschmack, das heydnische und christliche so nahe zusammen zu bringen—da wäre ihm aus Ärger eingefallen zu sagen, ey seht ihr denn nicht, daß ich den Triumph unsrer Religion damit andeuten will, daß ich die *Madonna* auf dieses *pedestal* stelle? (II, 12-13)

The foregoing discussion has been directed toward indicating briefly Caroline's proximity to Herder and Goethe, her position in the Jena Circle, and the manner in which she harmonized these different trends. Here is an individual at the turn of the century whose harmony of view was the result of a harmony of personality. Schiller's dualism of "Pflicht" and "Neigung" held little meaning for Caroline; she put her trust and faith in her "Genius." In this she stood firmly between Herder and Goethe—and the Jena Circle.

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²⁷ For a discussion of Söder and August Wilhelm, cf. Sulger-Gebing, pp. 26-27.

REVIEWS

Piers Plowman and the Scheme of Salvation: An Interpretation of Dowel, Dobet, and Dobest. By ROBERT WORTH FRANK, JR. New Haven: Yale Studies in English, Vol. 136; London: Oxford University Press, 1957. Pp. xiv + 123. \$4.00.

William Langlands "*Piers Plowman*": *Eine Interpretation des C-Textes.* Von WILLI ERZGRÄBER. Heidelberg: Carl Winter, Universitätsverlag, Frankfurter Arbeiten aus dem Gebiete der Anglistik und der Amerika-Studien, Heft 3, 1957. Pp. 248. DM 24.-.

To do justice to R. W. Frank's excellent book requires more than a few words. I will try to indicate briefly its thesis, its most valuable contributions to our understanding of *Piers Plowman*, and, finally, such reservations as I have concerning certain of the author's ideas about the poem. The subject of the book is that complex portion of the B-text of *Piers* sometimes called the *Vita*, or *Dowel, Dobet, and Dobest* (B passus VIII-XX). Robert Frank finds that this part of the poem is a unified whole and that it presents the "scheme of salvation," that is, God's plan for the salvation of mankind. He then proceeds to demonstrate this view by means of a close analysis of each section: *Dowel* (B VIII-XIV), *Dobet* (B XV-XVIII), and *Dobest* (B XIX-XX).

After outlining his method of procedure and describing the organization of the poem as a whole (Chapters I and II), Frank begins his analysis in Chapter III with a brilliant exposition of the pardon scene of the *Visio*, demonstrating once and for all, I trust, that *Piers* accepts the pardon from Truth and that the poet in no way wishes to suggest that *Piers* must turn to some new way of life. (There is a slip on p. 28; read "The view that *Piers rejects* the pardon creates too many difficulties to be tenable.") This key interpretation clears the way for his analysis of the remainder of the poem.

Frank's observations on the flexibility of the poet's use of the triad (*Dowel, Dobet, and Dobest*), his rejection of the autobiographical method of reading the poem (still surprisingly popular), and his application to the text of current controversial issues (the friars, penance, and the doctrine of *redde quod debes*), are all very illuminating. To this reviewer, however, Frank's most salutary contribution is his refutation of the "three lives" theory. I have never thought that *Piers Plowman* has anything whatever to do with the active, contemplative, or mixed lives. Yet this idea has dominated *Piers Plowman* criticism for the last twenty-five years. Fortunately Frank has, I think, permanently disposed of this misconception.

Perhaps the primary deficiency of Frank's study is his failure to pay sufficient heed to the A-text. In explaining his choice of texts, he says: "I shall study the B-text version rather than the relatively neglected C-text, because the B-text, it is generally agreed, preceded the C-text, and because I believe one faces fewer problems working from an understanding of B to an understanding of C than one does working in the reverse order" (p. 1). But, of course, the same reasoning applies to A in relation to B. No interpretation of the B-version can be entirely reliable unless it is based on a sound understanding of the A-text. Such an understanding is particularly crucial in reading B passus VIII-XIV, called "*Dowel*" in the B-text; and Frank's interpretation of this part of the poem is, I believe, the weakest section of his book.

In describing the plan of *Dowel, Dobet, and Dobest*, Frank says, "the Trinity

is, I believe, the organizing principle in the second part" (p. 16). He goes on to point out that the Father is associated with the creation of the world and man; the Son with the events of Christ's life and death; and the Holy Ghost with the period after the ascension. This conception of the structure of the *Vita* does not fit B passus VIII-XIV very well, but it is useful in passus XV-XX, a fact which accounts for the excellence of the analysis in Chapters VI and VII. Frank's success here is due, however, not to his conception of the Trinity as the organizing principle (which I do not believe to be valid), but to the customary association of this doctrine—as Frank himself points out—with a biblical chronology, from Genesis to Revelation, which is the real organizing principle of the B-continuation (B XI-XX). B passus VIII-X, of course, is simply a revision of the allegorical *débat* in the A-text (an entirely different literary form), and the B-poet, though he revises some of the ideas expressed in A, does not attempt to make this part of the poem conform to the literary structure of the B-continuation.

In spite of these weaknesses, Frank's explication of the "scheme of salvation" is excellent in many ways. He is scrupulously honest in his analysis of the text, and he never glosses over a passage, even when its relation to his interpretation may at first seem obscure. In his study of the ideological background of the poem Frank wisely avoids relying extensively on the scholastics. Rather he makes effective use of such various popular works as Bartholomaeus Anglicus, *De Proprietatibus Rerum*, and Richard Fitzralph, *Defensio Curatorum*. These texts bring us very close to the intellectual interests of the author of the B-text. Much more could be said. *Piers Plowman* and the Scheme of Salvation is, in my opinion, the best single study of the poem that we now have.

Willi Erzgräber's interpretation of the C-text of *Piers Plowman* might at first seem to invite comparison with Frank's study of the B-text, but the two are really not comparable. By concentrating on the C-text, Erzgräber has chosen a rather more difficult task. There is much in the German scholar's book that is worthy of praise. It is quite evident that Erzgräber has familiarized himself with the labyrinthine ways of *Piers Plowman* scholarship. Like R. W. Frank, he seems to recognize the value of the work of Konrad Burdach in *Der Dichter des Ackermann aus Böhmen und seine Zeit*, though he is rarely guilty of uncritical reliance on the conclusions of others. He occasionally cites E. T. Donaldson's book on the C-text (published in 1949), but fortunately he is not argumentative, nor does he use Donaldson as a means of exhibiting his own interpretation to better advantage.

Erzgräber proceeds systematically through the C-text from beginning to end, interpreting it in the light of medieval philosophy and theology. Seeing the poem in this way is of considerable value, and the reader will be grateful for the author's discussion of the poet's ideas in connection with those of Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, and Duns Scotus, among others in the medieval tradition. Particularly noteworthy is Erzgräber's discovery of a possible source for the poet's definition of the soul (C XVII, 201) in the pseudo-Augustinian tractate, *De Spiritu et Anima* (p. 170).

But in spite of the many valuable contributions of this book, it has certain shortcomings that should be mentioned. One is the fact that Erzgräber rarely considers the C-text in its relation to the earlier versions. To be sure, keeping in mind simultaneously the three versions of *Piers* is no easy task, but I think that a synoptic reading will be necessary if the poem is ever to be successfully interpreted. Moreover, I was disappointed to find that Erzgräber's "interpreta-

tion" of the C-text is in fact no more than a commentary on the poem in relation to the ideas of its age. There is surely a limit to what can be learned about *Piers Plowman* from a study of the main currents of medieval thought. The poem is, after all, a work of art, and deserves more attention to its literary form than it has hitherto received.

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Samuel Johnson: Diaries, Prayers and Annals. Edited by E. L. McADAM, JR., with DONALD and MARY HYDE. New Haven: Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson, Vol. I; London: Oxford University Press, 1958. Pp. xxi + 461. \$10.00.

In *The Idler* (No. 84) Johnson remarked that the biographer of another person, by dwelling on conspicuous achievements, "endeavours to hide the man that he may produce a hero." The advantage of autobiography is that it enables the reader to discover, "not how any man became great, but how he was made happy; not how he lost the favour of his prince, but how he became discontented with himself." Although Johnson failed to leave a complete record of his own life, this new volume collects the various brief diaries, memoranda, and jottings that he would undoubtedly have drawn upon had he undertaken such a work. The materials are arranged in chronological order, and gaps in the account are to some extent bridged by the running commentary that the editors have judiciously provided in the place of conventional footnotes. As a result, we now have a text that approaches autobiography. It is chiefly the older Johnson that is revealed. As in Boswell's account, approximately four-fifths of the work is concerned with the last twenty years of his life.

What the book provides is not an essentially new portrait, but a more detailed, a more sharply etched picture of Johnson in the privacy of his study or bed-chamber. There is nothing here of the affable guest who enlivened the dinner table at Streatham, nothing of the formidable social debater, little of the quick wit that marked his conversation. Because the travel diaries he kept on visits to France and to Wales are included, we are able to observe him in the role of a traveler. As a *voyageur*, he is curious about antiquities, an acute observer of the arts of manufacture, and always interested in comparing manners and customs. Most of the records, however, are of a more personal nature. From the opening page ("I was born almost dead") to the end of the volume there are accounts of illness and suffering. The modern reader, accustomed to all the anodynes of the Bufferin age, may find such details wearisome. But Johnson was no hypochondriac. Living before the development of modern medicine and anesthetics, he might, almost as well as Pope, have referred to his existence as "this long disease, my life."

The most personal materials are the prayers and religious reflections. Some of these have never been printed before; others, though not entirely new, appear for the first time without the deletions of early editors. These religious writings strengthen the established impression of Johnson as a devout Christian, troubled by scruples and fear-ridden by the thought that he might not be saved. Nevertheless, there is danger of interpreting the prayers in such a way as to overemphasize his sense of guilt. It should be observed that many, if not most, of them were composed at the beginning of a new year or in preparation for receiving the Sacrament. On such occasions Johnson engaged in stock-

taking, or, to use a less secular term, he systematically made an examination of his conscience. Thus many of the prayers are penitential exercises, comparable to those printed in the Book of Common Prayer as part of the service for the administration of the Lord's Supper. This type of prayer characteristically embodies a confession of having sinned, an expression of sorrow for the transgressions, a petition for forgiveness, and a resolve to amend one's life. Johnson frequently follows this formula, except that, praying as an individual, he alludes to specific sins, such as sloth; and instead of asserting that he is repentant, he usually asks (probably because of his scruples) that he may be truly contrite. Interpreted in this way, his prayers are, in the most ecclesiastical sense of the term, truly confessional. Hence they inevitably emphasize his feelings of guilt, especially since he prayed in the spirit of the publican rather than of the Pharisee.

This volume, the first in the Yale Edition of the Works of Johnson, is indispensable for the eighteenth-century scholar. Casual readers may also consult it with profit, if only to correct a false view. Too often they come from a superficial reading of Boswell's *Life* with the impression that arrogance was the predominant characteristic of Johnson. Better than any other work, the *Diaries, Prayers, and Annals* proves that one of the basic qualities of the man was his profound humility.

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Romantic Image. By FRANK KERMODE. New York: Macmillan Company, 1957. Pp. ix + 171. \$3.75.

Frank Kermode's book is superior literary history and criticism, and should be read by everyone interested in the literature of this century and the last. Based on original perceptions and points of view, it expounds one central thesis: that a clear thread of English romanticism runs from Keats, Coleridge, and Blake through the Victorian age into our own, and includes such unlikely "romantics" as T. S. Eliot, T. E. Hulme, and Ezra Pound.

Kermode's use of the term "romantic" is special: any artist is properly "romantic" if he believes, first, that the image has an autonomy quite apart from discursive considerations, and, second, that the poet as a true artist finds himself isolated or estranged from society. The image itself comprises both the traditional symbol or object appearing in specific poems and, as the symbol acquires an increasingly prominent place in the efforts of the poets concerned, the poem itself as a unit, or an "object" of art, having its own aesthetic integrity and purity.

The study is in two parts. The first brilliantly traces the romantic image from its origins with the British romantics, through the Victorians (the analysis of Matthew Arnold is particularly incisive), to its fruition in the poetry of Yeats, the central figure. In Yeats, the romantic isolation and the concern for the autonomy of the image are readily apparent: his major symbols (tree, dance, mask, and tower) reconcile the poet to an inevitable seclusion. The entire section on Yeats is remarkably good.

Part Two traces twentieth-century manifestations of the romantic image, particularly in Pound, Eliot, and Hulme, and pinpoints what Kermode feels are the crucial problems raised by imagist verse and criticism for the future of the art. Pound and the vorticists bring imagism to the sterile point foreseen by Arthur

Symons, the neglected but seminal symbolist critic of the 1890's: they seek so pure an image that they appear to wish poems could be composed of something other than words. Both T. E. Hulme's muddled sense of history and Eliot's "dissociation of sensibility" theory are distortions which have led to the rejection of entire decades of "dissociated" poetry. (Kermode regrets most the symbolists' neglect of Milton and the long poem.)

If we are to maintain a vital poetry, Kermode believes, we must reappraise the symbolist aesthetic and practice; poets whose reputations have suffered must be reconsidered; and the long poem must again become possible. Just how this reevaluation should come about and what new directions poetry should take are not clear, and the reader may feel, with some justification, that Kermode has offered too meager a program. But his main effort has been to revise "historical categories," not to recommend definite action—that is the proper business of new poets.

This reviewer is curious as to why Dylan Thomas does not figure at all in a study of the romantic image, and he wishes that the few tantalizing statements about Wallace Stevens could have been expanded. These reservations, however, are minor. Frank Kermode deserves praise for a courageous and challenging study, for literary criticism in the highest sense.

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Le Fonte Italiane della "Romola" di George Eliot. By MARIA TOSELLO. Torino: G. Giappichelli, 1956. Pp. 141.

John Walter Cross, in his *George Eliot's Life as Related in her Letters and Journals* (1885), appended a list of books which his late wife had read while working on *Romola*. In 1906 Guido Biagi, chief librarian of the Laurentian Library in Florence, published in England an edition of *Romola* for which he wrote a lengthy introduction that brought to light further information on the sources of George Eliot's Italian novel. Biagi dug into the archives of the library and unearthed the *ricevute* which Lewes, acting on behalf of his wife, had to fill out and sign in order to procure the books needed for her research. From these *ricevute* Biagi discovered the exact titles of the books George Eliot had consulted during her six-week stay in Florence in the spring of 1861.

In his introduction Biagi elaborated upon the contents of these books and identified the contributions each had made to the author's knowledge of the history and topography of Florence, as well as the customs, manners, dress, and daily habits of its people. In her journal George Eliot referred to various authors and titles of books which she had read in London subsequent to her Florentine sojourn, but she did not give any further details of their bearing upon her work at hand. Until the appearance of Miss Tosello's book, Biagi's introduction to his edition of *Romola* remained the only extensive treatment of the sources of the novel, and he, as we have noted, confined himself to George Eliot's studies in Florence.

Maria Tosello, in her study of *Le Fonte Italiane della "Romola" di George Eliot*, has made a valuable contribution to George Eliot scholarship. Her volume covers the researches pursued by the diligent novelist both in Florence and in London, and she has examined closely those books which she believes to have been the principal sources of the vast amount of erudition that George Eliot poured into *Romola*. In many instances, she covers ground already trav-

ersed by Biagi, and she frequently acknowledges her indebtedness to him; but the significance of her work lies in her additions to the older scholar's findings and in her refutation of certain of his arguments. In the second chapter, "Letture in Inghilterra e a Firenze," Miss Tosello examines in the light of her own investigations each of the books mentioned by Biagi in his introduction to *Romola*. She concludes that Biagi perhaps overrated the importance of these books as sources of *Romola*, in view of the fact, as indicated by the *ricerche*, that George Eliot did not take sufficient time to make any one of them wholly her own.

This section on George Eliot's reading while she was in Florence is the weakest part of Miss Tosello's book. Biagi felt certain that he could trace at least some of the sources of *Romola* by comparing passages from these ancient volumes in the Laurentian Library with corresponding passages in the novel. He had no direct evidence from George Eliot herself that would have removed all doubt from his conclusions, but worked entirely within the limits of reasonable conjecture.

In recent years, however, the British Museum has come into possession of a notebook which George Eliot kept while working in Florence and later in London, and which is available to scholars on microfilm. In this notebook one can find direct quotations from such volumes as *Firenze Antica e Moderna Illustrata*, as well as random jottings, in English and Italian, from probably all the sources she perused, however hastily. Miss Tosello, unfortunately, did not avail herself of this material, an indispensable reference to any student of *Romola*; thus, her work in this chapter, like that of Biagi before her, never goes beyond conjecture.

The most valuable part of Miss Tosello's work is to be found in Chapter III: "Influenze del Nardi e del Villari." She contends that George Eliot drew from the reference works consulted in Florence only those materials she needed for painting the rich and minutely detailed picture of Florentine life we find in the first book of *Romola*; for the second and third books of her novel, those in which the historical elements play a predominant part, she drew upon Jacopo Nardi and Pasquale Villari.

Biagi, like other writers on George Eliot, stated for a certainty that, for her portrayal of Savonarola and the historical events of his time, she was indebted almost solely to Villari's monumental *La Storia di G. Savonarola e de' suoi tempi*. Miss Tosello, however, does not accept the traditional view of her predecessors as to Villari's preponderant influence on *Romola*; instead, she seeks to prove, with an impressive array of evidence, that Nardi's *Istorie di Firenze* played at least as great a part in the evolution of *Romola* as did the work of Villari.

Miss Tosello's work in comparing the respective influences of Nardi and Villari on George Eliot is acutely painstaking and highly commendable. In building up her case for Nardi she quotes at length extracts from his *History* and then places immediately after them passages from the novel to show the direct influence of the latter upon the former. She believes that George Eliot drew most heavily from Nardi for the second part of her novel and for the beginning of the third and final part, but she makes it clear that she does not wish to underestimate the importance of Villari to George Eliot:

Indubbiamente l'importanza dell'opera del Villari non va sottovalutata. Già esaminando le fonti nell'ordine seguito dal Nardi, abbiamo dovuto spesso lasciare questo autore per abbinarvi ed inserirvi l'influenza dello storico più recente. (p. 116)

That the Savonarola who dominates the pages of *Romola* was inspired by Villari, Miss Tosello does not deny. It is her contention that the two historians, the one contemporaneous with the events George Eliot recorded and the other writing some three centuries after their occurrence, each exerted his own separate influence upon the novelist. Miss Tosello makes a very neat distinction between Nardi and Villari:

Costui [Nardi] è il cronista spicciolo, contemporaneo, portato dalle passioni di parti, ed a lui George Eliot ricorre quando vuole particolari banali o commoventi che servono di sfondo. Villari invece è lo storico documentato quasi sempre più diffuso (soprattutto nelle notizie su Savonarola che nella III parte di *Romola* assume il ruolo di protagonista) che è giunto a conclusione solo dopo aver confrontato e ponderato numerose fonti. (p. 75)

She concludes:

crediamo che George Eliot, lette di cronache del Nardi ed entusiasmata delle loro semplicità e linearità, le abbia tenute presenti in una stesura del romanzo. Venuta in seguito a conoscenza dell'opera del Villari ne trasse ulteriori ampliamenti, senza necessità di troppe modifiche, dato che il Nardi, il Parenti ed il Cerretani (che compaiono sovente nell'edizione del Nardi consultata da George Eliot) sono autori di cui Villari si servì ampiamente. (p. 123)

Miss Tosello has revealed a wide knowledge of and a deep insight into her subject, and certainly her arguments are convincing. One may not agree with her in every respect, but few would deny that her book merits recognition as a noteworthy contribution to the list of recent specialized studies in the increasingly important field of Anglo-Italian letters.

JOHN A. HUZZARD

Pennsylvania State University

The Heath Anthology of German Poetry. Edited by AUGUST CLOSS and T. PUGH WILLIAMS. Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1958. Pp. 563. \$5.00. [Same as Harrap: London, 1957.]

The Penguin Book of German Verse. Edited by LEONARD FORSTER. Penguin Books D 36, 1957. Pp. xlii + 466. \$0.95.

These two fine anthologies survey the great landscape of German poetry extending over eleven hundred years. Both of them give all texts in the original. The Heath Anthology supplies modern German renderings for the Old High German and glosses for difficult syntax and vocabulary in the Middle High German; the Penguin Book offers English translations throughout, "intended simply as aids to the understanding of the German." In the former 160 poets are represented; in the latter 84. Both give generous samples of anonymous lyrics and folksongs, and both introduce dialect poems (Hebel and Groth). The Heath Anthology commendably includes among the contemporary many younger poets (Hagelstange, Holthusen, Krolow, Höllerer); the Penguin Book, with some misgivings, includes "no author born after 1900."

The introductory essays in both books are admirable. The twelve-page Penguin introduction is intended apparently for the cultured layman and strikes the right balance of stimulating generalization and pertinent detail. But, it might be noted, the hopes of the expressionists to overcome the barriers between man and man and between the poet and society were disappointed before 1933 (one need recall only the experience of Ernst Toller). The Heath introduction is

an incisive and perceptive historical survey which will serve the student well. The relation between introduction and text, however, might have been more carefully executed, for many poets appear who are not even mentioned in the introduction. These range from minor figures, who might better not have been honored in either text or introduction (Rosenegg, Bodenstedt, Leuthold, Schoenaich-Carolath, etc.), to Rückert, R. Wagner, Morgenstern, and Heym. It is an oversight, of course, to leave the reader with the impression that Hofmannsthal's portrayal of man does not extend beyond Claudio, and it is debatable that Rilke's ultimate love and understanding of all things encompassed "God, who is the permanent centre and the goal of human aspiration." The Heath Anthology includes a helpful historical exposition of versification and a most welcome selected list of reference books (six pages). The Penguin Book omits the bibliography but offers in the table of contents felicitous précis for individual poets, some notes on pronunciation and dialect, and an index of titles and first lines.

The Penguin Book will be an immediate favorite of students, and they will benefit from much more than just the translations. The Heath Anthology should sweep the field. It is more comprehensive and modern than its strongest rival, Friedrich Brun's *Die Lese der deutschen Lyrik*; it reflects contemporary tastes and criteria, against which some aspects of the *Oxford Book of German Verse* now seem rather odd (Heym and Werfel with but one poem each, and no Trakl; Heyse eight pages, Hölderlin five). The collection *Tausend Jahre deutscher Dichtung*, although it appeared less than ten years ago, ends with the expressionists; furthermore, its proportion and balance do not always seem as discriminating (for instance: Heine has six pages, Hölty six, Lenau seven, Meyer five, Storm three, and Schiller twenty-one). Erwin Laaths, in his otherwise excellent anthology *Das Gedicht* (1951), modernizes the selections from Old High and Middle High German verse, ends with Weinheber, and betrays occasional unbalance (distressingly little of Heine, no Morgenstern, Busch, Kästner, or Brecht).

But to compare anthologies thus is to be guilty of ingratitude, for every anthologist is proffering his readers a beautiful bouquet. In the *bouquets imaginaires* under review here the reader will be delighted to find a host of perennial favorites: the sturdy *Hildebrandslied* (the Heath Anthology gives only twenty-two lines but, as it were, in compensation offers the *Merseburger Zaubersprüche*); bright and somber songs of Walther (*Unter der linden* and *Ich saz ûf eime steine*); the glorious hymn *Ein feste Burg*; the poignant Volkslied *Ich hört' ein Sichlein rauschen*; a dozen and a half of Goethe's radiant lyrics; varicolored romantic songs (Eichendorff's *Sehnsucht*, Heine's *Ein Fichtenbaum steht einsam*); Hölderlin's stark beauty (*Hyperions Schicksalslied*); Lenau's melancholy *Bitte*; Mörike's simple sustained *Gebet*; Meyer's sculptured *Römischer Brunnen*; Rilke's haunting sonnet *Nur wer die Leier schon hob*; all are in both collections. And there are some pleasing surprises. The Heath Anthology offers Fleming's earthy *Wie er wolle geküsst seyn*, Claudius's penetrating *Kriegslied*, Grillparzer's elegiac *Abschied von Gastein*, Mörike's puckish *Elfenlied*, and Holthausen's austere *Tabula Rasa*. In the Penguin Book one remembers Johannes Rist's anguished *Betrachtung der zukünftigen unendlichen Ewigkeit*, Hebel's tart dialect ditty *Auf den Tod eines Zechers*, Holz's buffoonish *Barocke Marine*, and Benn's mordant *Verlorenes Ich*.

It is good to see a number of longer poems in full: Goethe's *Trilogie der Leidenschaft*, Hölderlin's *Brot und Wein*, all of Platen's Venetian sonnets, and

Heine's *La Mouche* (which the Penguin Book prints without identification). But it is disturbing to have to do with occasional splinters and excerpts from dramas (Heath drops the second half of Heym's *Ophelia*, Penguin prints only Part II of Brentano's *Nachklänge Beethovenscher Musik*; Heath quotes four lines from *Penthesilea*). And oddly enough, among the very few absent from both collections are Hesse and Kästner.

Inevitably some favorites are missing: Gryphius' splendid sonnet on the world's conceit, Brentano's moving *Frühlingsschrei eines Knechtes aus der Tiefe*, Heine's dramatic *Belsatzer*, and Eichendorff's exhilarating *Wem Gott will rechte Gunst erweisen*. Have our tastes so changed that we choose only two poems of Werfel (Penguin has only one)? Must we still include *Das Lied von der Glocke*? Would Günderode, Hauff, Herwegh, Lorm, Greif, and Salus, Tiedge and von Zuccalmaglio really be missed? Is it a sound principle to include a poet with a single sample and, in the case of Penguin's Dehmel, with an "uncharacteristic" poem? But again these are prejudiced reflections which do not reduce the merits of the two anthologies.

Teachers and students will appreciate the judicious selection of variegated themes which adds to the distinction of the Heath Anthology. The three Loreleis are here (Brentano's, Eichendorff's, and Heine's), and the discerning reader will delight in the opportunity to compare the twelfth-century "dawn-song" with its modern counterparts (Dietmar's *Släfst du, friedel ziere, Mörike's Früh im Wagen*, Liliencron's *Heimgang in der Frühe*, and Carossa's *Heimweg*). Post-war verse is modestly but impressively represented, especially in F. G. Jünger's disciplined, detached reflection on human folly (*Ultima Ratio*), in Hagelstange's clipped utterance of despair (from the *Ballade vom verschütteten Leben*), and in von Heiseler's stern voice of repentance and atonement (*In Memoriam Patriae: Das Reich*). One regrets that Hans von Savigny's imposing *Elegie der getrosteten Verzweiflung*, so highly praised in 1949 by the Penguin editor, could not have been included.

KARL S. WEIMAR

Brown University

Bibliographie der deutschen Literaturwissenschaft, 1945-1953. By HANNS W. EPPELSHEIMER. Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1957. Pp. xxxii + 550. DM 52.50 kart.; DM 48.50 brosch.

This copious and handy bibliography represents a tentative beginning ("zero point": 1945) which is to be continued by shorter but more frequent listings. It includes titles of works on general literary criticism as well as those dealing with specifically German literature. The coverage embraces a large number of journals and literary anthologies, mostly from the "western democracies"; publications behind the Iron Curtain—including Eastern Germany and oriental countries—are thus ignored.

The titles are conveniently arranged according to generations and genres. Larger works, or more prominent authors, are then treated in special detail. Indeed, the entire work demonstrates an accomplishment of rare bibliographical ingenuity. Dr. Eppelsheimer is director of the Deutsche Bibliothek in Frankfurt—a small, but efficient institution attempting to function as a sort of "Congressional Library" for Western Germany, but with the special advantage of being able to contribute to all types of scholarly research.

The low incidence of typographical errors may be regarded as a tribute to the

energy of the compiler. Besides the ones listed on page 550, I would add only these: pp. 99 and 529, read *Ulvestad*; p. 365, read *Some*. My only other complaint is that book reviews are listed entirely by hit-and-miss procedure; if they are to be included at all, they should all be included.

CARROLL E. REED

University of Washington

Hermann Hesse and His Critics. By JOSEPH MILECK. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Studies in the Germanic Languages and Literatures, No. 21, 1958. Pp. xiv + 329. \$8.00, cloth; \$7.00, paper.

This hefty volume was written to meet "a very definite need for a study... which presents the pertinent facts of Hesse's life and art and which makes possible a rapid orientation in the criticism centered about his work." Part I, "Hermann Hesse," contains a bio-bibliographical sketch and two chapters relating Hesse to his art and his age; Part II, "Hermann Hesse and His Critics," is a commentary on the major books, pamphlets, and articles about Hesse, particularly those published between 1927 and 1955; Part III presents what the author rightly calls "the most comprehensive Hesse bibliography to date (June, 1957)."

Granting the aim of the work and the impressive amount of material investigated ("every available item written in any language and published before 1956 was examined"), Joseph Mileck's general plan of organization seems sound. Individual parts of the book, however, were perhaps not always so well thought out. A more rapid orientation, and incidentally a smaller book, might have resulted if the minor articles listed in Part II had been referred to according to their number in the Bibliography rather than cited fully, as is now done, in the body of the text. Similarly, in Part III, it is cumbersome to list the works by and about Hesse chronologically according to type of work and manner of publication; e.g., under "Short Stories, Articles, and Poems in Periodicals," an alphabetical arrangement would have served better, particularly for those who might know only the title of a work and seek precisely the kind of information given here as a category of classification. The Index is no help in this respect, since it merely designates the pages on which a particular work has been mentioned without giving any hint of the context.

The areas of discussion in Part II, such as "Hesse's Religion" or "Hesse and Music," had to be chosen arbitrarily, of course; but they are also unduly conventional. Furthermore, although such categorization was necessary in order to undertake any analysis of the major works on Hesse, a task which "proved more difficult than anticipated," Mileck does not always realize his intention. The sections provide more than mere bibliographical description, but often rather less than a genuine commentary; consequently, the reader who might have been grateful for minimal information begins to grow disappointed with a discussion that takes only half-way issue with a writer's arguments.

The entire middle section of the book makes one wonder for whom the book was written. Mileck implies that it is intended for those "fellow students of Hesse" who have occasionally prevailed upon him for bibliographical or other information. Yet for them, only Part III is a treasure; the material of Part I and Part II, readily available elsewhere, is both too brief and too superficial to satisfy any serious curiosity. Were these first two parts intended, then, for the generally cultured American reader who might have heard of Hesse but

has-not easily been able to gain information about him until now? Yet such a reader is not apt to find his way to Hesse through this book: if the scholarly appurtenances do not frighten him off, the manner of presentation will. I wonder, in short, if Mileck was not wrongly persuaded to write a work which would seem both "exhaustive" within certain limits and "of general interest" on the whole? These are worthy, but opposite or even incompatible, aims that have produced far too many books trying to appeal to all men without satisfying any.

Indefiniteness of purpose, if such it be, might account for some of the book's mildly annoying characteristics. How disappointing, for example, to be led constantly to expect interesting information only to be denied it! The bio-bibliographical section conscientiously records the key events of Hesse's career, but neglects to give the accompanying data from which one might make an estimate of their effect on Hesse's life and art. Again, the interruption of the text with isolated German terms is disconcerting. What is gained by preserving the original expressions in such a sentence as "In *Demian* (1919) he acclaimed the principle of *Geist*, with its *Selbsterkenntnis* and *Selbstverwirklichung*, and a Nietzschean emphasis upon the *Eigensinn* of the superior being" (p. 20)? After a while, this device loses any stimulating effect it might have had and begins to suggest a certain indifference on the part of the author toward his reader.

Let the final words, however, be words of praise. Joseph Mileck has written a book which is certain to become a useful handbook for the various needs of various people at various times. He has, moreover, repeatedly pointed out the need for further study in certain areas and has implied many more: e.g., an investigation of the essays and the work of Hesse's earliest period, the so-called "*Gaienhofen Novellen*"; a study of the influence of Jakob Burckhardt and Keller; and the necessity of subjecting the poems to a detailed technical analysis. Mileck's own judicious discussion of Hesse's political attitude, and of the political attitude toward him, might serve as a model for such limited but valuable studies. Finally, it is clear that the ultimate task of Hesse scholarship, the definite evaluation of this major writer, will lean heavily on the bibliographical instruments provided by this work.

LEROY R. SHAW

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Grillparzer auf der Bühne: Eine fragmentarische Geschichte. By NORBERT FUERST. Wien and München: Manutiuspresse, 1958. Pp. 287. \$3.80. Distributed in the U.S.A. by M. S. Rosenberg, New York City.

In this book Norbert Fuerst has given us a history of Grillparzer's dramas as they were presented on the stage from the time of their first performances down to the present. With painstaking research into the pertinent material, historical and statistical, he reveals the fate of the individual plays—their reception by the public and the number of times they appeared in the theaters of Austria, Germany, and Switzerland. He also tells of the complete disappearance of individual plays from the stage for a goodly number of years and then their sudden emergence from oblivion, as it were, to become popular and permanent features in the repertoire of a given theater.

This account is, of course, also replete with the names of the actors and actresses whose dramatic skill revealed to the public the beauty of Grillparzer's dramas. Kainz, Heurteur, Anschütz, Matkowsky, Balser, to name at random only a few of the actors, and Charlotte Wolter, Julie Gley-Rettich, Clara

Ziegler, Sophie Schröder, Agnes Sorma, and Agnes Straub, among the actresses. The reader of this work will surely appreciate the fine analyses of those personal qualities of the performers which made their portrayals of Grillparzer's characters an unforgettable inner experience. In order to support his statements, the author quotes liberally and often at great length from criticisms and reviews in the newspapers, critical journals, and books of the period.

According to Norbert Fuerst, Grillparzer assumed a different attitude toward his dramas after *König Ottokar*; until then, he was prone to identify himself completely with them as expressing his deepest feelings and highest artistic ideals. With the *Treue Diener*, a change suddenly came over him. He began to regard them with an air of detachment and noticeable objectivity, and even though he defended them, he was, nevertheless, conscious of their imperfections. Another striking difference the author points out is Grillparzer's predilection to provide an abundance of stage directions in his earlier dramas, while in the later ones, he gives such directions more sparingly and then often buries them in the text itself.

In the reviewer's opinion it is a great merit of Norbert Fuerst that he has brought out and emphasized the fact that Grillparzer, in his later plays, was really far in advance of his time. The subtle psychology and the probing into the hidden recesses of thought and emotion give them a strikingly modern note that sounds more like the twentieth century than the one that gave birth to them. This explains, for example, the fact that a drama like *Hero* with so little outward action did not really become popular until the period of Impressionism; not until then was the public "ripe" enough to understand and appreciate a play with such fine psychology. Furthermore, the content, with its shift of emphasis from the individual to society, gives to the later plays a greater appeal to us moderns.

Several stage managers to whom the production of Grillparzer's plays was entrusted also receive the author's attention. Each of them employed a different approach. Laube concentrated his efforts on diction, "Wortregie": to enunciate clearly and to bring out and emphasize the meaning and the musical quality of every word and pregnant phrase was, in his opinion, the duty and purpose of the actor. Dingelstedt, in turn, cultivated what has been called the "Bildregie," which aimed to please the eye with beautiful stage-settings. "Man kommt zu schauen, man will am liebsten sehen." The Duke of Meiningen and his troupe fostered action, movement, and mass scenes with emphasis on historical fidelity. Then came Otto Brahm, who opened the eyes and ears of the public to the more subdued and deeper beauty of Grillparzer's dramas.

Students of Grillparzer are indebted to Norbert Fuerst for this exhaustive and, in many respects, extraordinarily enlightening book on Grillparzer's relation to the stage. It is definitive in its field, and anyone wishing to know when and where and how often a certain drama was performed will have to consult this book. He is certain to find right answers there.

THEODORE GRISSENDOERFER

University of Illinois

The Idea of Decadence in French Literature, 1830-1900. By A. E. CARTER. Toronto: University of Toronto Romance Series, No. 3, 1958. Pp. ix + 154. \$4.50.

The concept of decadence among French writers and artists of the last century has, strangely enough, never received adequate treatment from historians

of letters. The parallel and derivative movement in Great Britain, from Swinburne to Pater, has, on the other hand, been thoroughly studied, in particular by French scholars such as A. G. Farmer and Miss Rosenblatt. This volume will fill the gap. It could not, in 150 pages, embrace all aspects of a vast and confused trend. The arts, pictorial and musical, are left out; the complex ramifications of the French tree of decadence in Italy (D'Annunzio *et al.*), in Germany (Nietzsche and Wagner accused each other of being decadent; Stefan George in his *Algalab* appropriated the crazy Roman emperor Heliogabal who had been one of the symbols of refined and diseased abnormality for the French), in England during the Yellow Decade and down to T. S. Eliot's *Hollow Men*, in America with James Huneker and James Branch Cabell, are all ignored in A. E. Carter's monograph. The last chapter on "The Glamours of Syntax" sketches but a few lineaments of the immense subject which the language of the decadents and of the symbolists proposes to linguistic experts. Pierre Guiraud has compiled an index to a few poets of that age, but a monumental work comparable to Du Cange's celebrated *Dictionary of Middle and Lower Latinity*, which fascinated the French decadents, should be undertaken. Finally, the aftermath of the decadent idea in twentieth-century France, which would deserve a whole volume in itself, is not touched upon here.

Within its limits, A. E. Carter's book is richly documented, perspicacious, impartial in its tone, serious but not humorless. The author moves with ease amid the Latin progenitors of the concept of decadence. For, paradoxically, those same Romans who had provided the French revolutionary leaders with numerous models of virile energy and of patriotic devotion to the Republic ("le Monde est vide depuis les Romains," Saint-Just exclaimed) are responsible for the glorification of decadence by French readers of Latin historians and poets. And the Latin decadents were not the late poets of the third and fourth centuries A.D. dear to Baudelaire and Rémy de Gourmont: Ausonius, Claudian, Rutilius Numatianus, nor even their predecessors like the Gaul Petronius, the Spaniard Lucan, or the African Apuleius. French imagination was fascinated by the orgies castigated by Roman historians and satirists such as Tacitus, Suetonius, and Juvenal. The worm of decrepitude gnawed at Roman vigor as early as the first century before Christ, when Caesar lauded the Belgians as "fortissimi," long before Tacitus was to proffer the crude Germans as models to his compatriots. Indeed, putrefaction (the Nietzschean "Fäulnis vor der Reife") preceded maturity itself and began with Romulus' murder of his brother, if not with Adam's imprudent first dessert of an apple.

It may well be that the cult of decadence is itself a manifestation of vitality and an outlet for exuberant energy. It spread in France during the Second Empire, the most active period of French economic achievement between the Consulate and the Fifth Republic. Balzac, Zola, Taine, three indefatigable workers, were the painters of that decadence and often seduced by its charm. Baudelaire, who in 1857 was universally branded as the epitome of corruption, is today no less universally celebrated as classical. Mallarmé, once ridiculed as the last dying gasp of a sick century, appears now as the one who struck the new paths since traveled over by Joyce and Valéry and the poets of ten other countries. The decadents were rebels after a fashion, protesting against conformity, materialism, the leveling down of democracy, the obsession with the practical characteristic of the new middle class, and the naïve, romantic cult of nature. They were the epigoni of the romantics who had first stood up for the privilege of not being merged into the colorless herd ("among them but not of them")

and for displaying their egotistic "ennui" or their more cosmic "Weltschmerz" as a badge of their independence.

The central role in A. E. Carter's gallery of decadents is played by Théophile Gautier. His *Préface* to the Calmann Lévy edition of the *Fleurs du Mal* crystallized the thinking on decadence of several decades, defined it in brilliant and cogent formulas, and served as a manifesto for another thirty years. Gautier, today unjustly treated by French critics who have set up Nerval on the pedestal where once stood the statue of the man whom Baudelaire and Flaubert had admired, deserves rehabilitation as a prose writer, as a critic, and as an extraordinary sower of ideas. He should, it seems, have been the bard of youthful and healthy vigor.

Je suis jeune; la pourpre en mes veines abonde.
Mes cheveux sont de jais et mes regards de feu,
Et sans gravier ni toux ma poitrine profonde
Aspire à pleins poumons l'air du ciel, l'air de Dieu.

Thus boasted Gautier in his salad days. But he was, in truth, a more somber pessimist than Vigny himself, haunted by the absurdity of man's fate and by nihilism, pursued by the omnipresence of death as Malraux's characters were to be a century later. In the rich and tedious lineage of literary homosexuality in the French nineteenth century, between Balzac's *Vautrin* and *Fille aux yeux d'or* and the refined and overliterary sexual perversions of Montesquiou and Jean Lorrain, the author of *Mademoiselle de Maupin* is entitled to the favored niche.

A curious chapter in A. E. Carter's volume shows how the medical study of degeneracy and of neuroses progressed in France between Pinel, the great ancestor of such studies around 1800, and Moreau de Tours, Prosper Lucas, and others around 1850-60, to be utilized to ridiculous ends by Zola and Huysmans and by the half-sick men of the *fin de siècle* era who endeavored to cure themselves of the poison of decadentism: Bourget was one of them. And it is doubtful whether the readers of his *Essais de psychologie contemporaine* derived messages of robust and prudently clerical health from his admonitions or were lured to the examples of perverse melancholy piercingly studied by the young novelist-critic. More should be done on the relationships between literature and psychopathology in France in the last century.

A. E. Carter's chapter on the *fin de siècle* decadents tends to be somewhat confused, probably because of the wealth of material available and his own reluctance to simplify or to clarify by grouping the multitude of decadents and literary adepts of sexual perversion behind a few leading ideas. In all fairness, it must be added that Péladan, Elémir Bourges, Jean Lorrain, Octave Mirbeau, or Rachilde, strangely neglected by authors of dissertations, indulged excesses in their complacent incursions into abnormalities which not many of our fastidious appetites will today stomach. How healthy in comparison do Proust, Gide, and Valéry appear, who were nurtured on that decadentist cuisine! They owe a good deal to their morbid predecessors, not least the avoidance of excesses into which they had seen their predecessors sink. The blend of mysticity and of artistry, of carnality and of plastic beauty loudly worshiped which had characterized many of the tenants of decadence became, with their twentieth-century successors, a more exacting and an almost severe ascent "per angusta ad augusta."

HENRI PEYRE

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Frédéric II, roi de Prusse: L'Anti-Machiavel. Edited by CHARLES FLEISCHAUER. Genève: Institut et Musée Voltaire, 1958. Vol. V of *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century*, edited by THEODORE BESTERMAN. Pp. 382. 42 Sw. frs.

All available texts concerning the *Anti-Machiavel* have finally been brought together: the *Prince* as Frederick read it in the 1696 translation by Amelot de la Houssaye, the drafts of Frederick's *Réfutation* (as published; the manuscripts disappeared during the last war), Voltaire's cuts and revisions in *L'Anti-Machiavel ou Examen du Prince de Machiavel* (Van Duren, September, 1740) and *Anti-Machiavel ou Essai de critique sur le Prince de Machiavel* (Pierre Paupie, October, 1740). A substantial preface, bibliography of editions, and index complete the scholarly presentation.

Charles Fleischauer traces the animated history of the composition and reception of the work from 1738 to 1749. Frederick's indignation at what he considered Machiavelli's immorality was first tempered by Voltaire; when Frederick became king May 31, 1740, it was balanced by political considerations which rendered him reluctant to see the work in print. When Van Duren refused to withdraw his edition, Voltaire edited the *Essai critique* to avoid offense to princes and the Church and claimed that it was the only authentic text.

Soon the relations between Frederick and Voltaire were strained by Frederick's aloofness. To make him commit himself and recognize the anonymous *Anti-Machiavel*, Voltaire wrote equally anonymous reviews and practically identified the author. He became disillusioned when Frederick attacked Silesia and hampered the distribution of the work. The abbé de Saint-Pierre, at first enthusiastic, was similarly disappointed when Frederick mocked his project of perpetual peace. Voltaire declined Frederick's invitation in 1742. It should, however, be added (Fleischauer does not) that Voltaire's admiration for Frederick remained strong enough to allow him to accept his hospitality after the death of Mme du Châtelet.

Karl Siegmar von Galéra, in the most complete previous discussion of the work, *Voltaire und der Antimachiavell Friedrichs des Grossen* (Halle, 1926)—Fleischauer does not mention it—classified its readers in three groups: blind partisans who defended every word of Frederick; detractors who stated that his wars belied his words; those unable to judge because they felt personally concerned, like Stanislas who, according to Fleischauer, requested changes because Charles XII of Sweden appeared as a foolhardy monarch and ruined his future by placing Stanislas on the throne of Poland.

Galéra emphasized the importance of this last group and the significance of the *Anti-Machiavel* as a critique of its era. He was correct; most critics agree that Frederick did not understand Machiavelli. Only if we recognize the contemporary significance of the *Anti-Machiavel*, can we see that it is more than an "edifying homily against rapacity, perfidy, arbitrary government and... wars" (Pierre Gaxotte, *Frederic the Great* [New Haven, 1942], p. 153). Galéra, however, went too far when he called it a diatribe, not against Machiavelli, but against France, Fleury, and his policies. Frederick was too respectful of Fleury, too bitter against Machiavelli, and far too conscious of his future ally in the Silesian wars to have composed an anti-French manifesto.

Fleischauer, who advances a more balanced and objective point of view, says of Frederick: "C'est la France qui est l'idéal machiavélique de son admiration envieuse" (p. 20). He points out that Frederick failed to grasp the essential last chapter of the *Prince* (the only one he does not discuss), Machiavelli's call for Italian unity; he also sees more in the *Anti-Machiavel* than a "réfutation."

Voltaire stated this opinion in his preface to the Paupie edition: "Il y a quelques endroits de l'ouvrage... qui sont plutôt des réflexions sur Machiavel que contre Machiavel" (p. 166); Rousseau said that Frederick "s'annonçait déjà tel qu'il devait dans peu se montrer" (pp. 11-12). Frederick's judgment of Europe in the *Anti-Machiavel* expresses the principles of his future policies. This is why the work is important and Fleischauer's new edition fully justified.

The paradox between the *Anti-Machiavel* and Frederick's wars has been exaggerated by those who understood the work differently. Frederick speaks of the king as a ruler devoted to his subjects and to justice. He demands that the ruler make his people proud and happy, that he inspire them by great deeds. He defends just wars (Chap. 26) and the conquest of territory in such wars (p. 176). When he insists that the prince devote himself to study and to the interests of his state, not to hunting and luxurious entertainment, he does not exclude war, as long as it is not solely for the personal gratification of the prince. Thus Frederick anticipates his later admission that a thirst for glorious accomplishment motivated the attack on Silesia.

Frederick changed only in so far as he came to believe that the prince must violate the absolute moral code of the *Anti-Machiavel*. In the *History of My Time* he repeated that a breach of contract is reprehensible, but added that this applies only to the private citizen protected by law; "but what court of law protects the prince faced with a ruler who breaks his word?... What matters more, the national interest or a convention between princes?" Thus, when Charles VI of Hapsburg died and the Pragmatic Sanction, calling for the succession of Maria Theresa, did not seem generally recognized, Frederick felt that the only question was: who attacked first. He admitted that his troops entered Austrian territory before his emissary even arrived in Vienna, at that with unacceptable conditions demanding the peaceful surrender of Silesia. The *Anti-Machiavel* reprimands princes who attack merely for personal aggrandizement, but even though Frederick knew his claims were not substantial (Gaxotte, p. 194), could he not have defended his attack of Silesia in terms of just wars and the need for glorious deeds cited in the *Anti-Machiavel*? The fact remains that the work anticipates neither Frederick's policy for a greater Prussia nor its surprising similarity to Machiavelli's plea for a unified Italy.

Fleischauer is correct in pointing out Frederick's inconsistencies. The *Anti-Machiavel* condemns colonizing foreign lands (p. 186), and Frederick settled West Prussia. But his work is overly moralistic, even though its critique is intelligent and expresses Frederick's future principles. Fleischauer's commentary is fair and comprehensive. Within the limits of a critical edition, he cannot develop parallels to previous theories of state, of Grotius, for instance; contemporary expressions such as Bolingbroke's *Patriot King* (1738), also influenced by Machiavelli, or future realizations; in some ways Frederick established a royalist *volonté générale* that can be compared with Rousseau's concept. Fleischauer has gathered the sources for such a study and has furnished an excellent introduction to the work.

May we add a suggestion to the Institut Voltaire? It is most unfortunate that the reader can find neither the name of the editor of this volume of the Studies nor the title of the work on the cover of the book itself. One must turn to page 7 to find the first mention of Charles Fleischauer. This editorial policy is likely to discourage collaborators. We urge Theodore Besterman to use a different form for the covers and title pages of future editions.

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Ensayos sobre literatura latinoamericana. Segunda serie. By A. TORRES-RÍO-SECO. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1958. Pp. 204.

In *Ensayos sobre literatura latinoamericana*, Torres-Ríoseco has collected several of his essays, articles, and reviews on subjects ranging from literary and cultural themes to poetry and prose in Latin America. The volume is divided into four sections. In the first part, "Temas literarios," the author has included essays devoted to specific writers and to subjects of a more general nature, for example, the essay "Divagaciones sobre literatura colombiana." In the second part, "Temas culturales," the author studies and evaluates cultural themes essential for a better understanding of Latin America. The third and fourth sections respectively are devoted to "Poesía" and "Prosa." By stressing the literary expression of Latin America and underlining the values affirmed in this literature, as well as studying cultural themes that encompass all of Latin America, Torres-Ríoseco has given his work a unity that similar collections of essays often lack.

The volume contains valuable studies on such outstanding Latin American writers as José Martí, José Eustasio Rivera, César Vallejo, Jaime Torres-Bodet, Eduardo Barrios, María Luisa Bombal, and José Toribio Medina. In the section devoted to cultural themes, the author poses and discusses penetratingly the question of freedom of expression in the Americas. In "Mi respuesta a Giovanni Papini," he severely rebukes Giovanni Papini for his failure to understand Latin America or its contribution to Western civilization. He presents a devastating criticism of Papini's ideas, and answers the accusation, made in Papini's study *Lo que América no ha dado*, that the New World has failed to produce great men in the fields of religion, philosophy, and literature. He effectively replies to the Italian writer by realistically setting forth Latin America's contribution to these fields. He lists a number of outstanding men in each field; among them are such notable persons as Santa Rosa de Lima, Alejandro Korn, Francisco Romero, Rubén Darío, and Gabriela Mistral. At the same time that Torres-Ríoseco exposes Papini's ignorance of Latin America, he succeeds in establishing the three basic defects in Papini's critical approach: narrow Catholicism, egoism, and lack of solidity in critical judgments.

In "Notas sobre la influencia de los Estados Unidos en nuestra literatura," Torres-Ríoseco warns against the many difficulties present in any study of literary influences. At the very beginning of the essay, he defines the term *influencia*:

Para mí "influencia" significa la acción que ejerce un escritor sobre otro, o una escuela sobre otra. Casi siempre esta acción indica predominio intelectual. Cuando un movimiento literario es influido por otro pierde aquél una suma importante de características tradicionales, deja de ser lo que debería haber sido si no hubieran actuado sobre él esas fuerzas foráneas. (p. 93)

The importance of this definition is readily understood when the author discusses the facility with which any critic may exaggerate the study of influences, illustrating his thesis with an analysis of Mariano Latorre's essay, "Bret Harte y el criollismo sudamericano." He accuses Latorre of finding Bret Harte's influence in every story dealing with miners, adventurers, *gauchos*, *huasos*, and *rotos*.

In this same essay, Torres-Ríoseco examines the possible influence of Walt Whitman and Edgar Allan Poe on Latin American writers. He believes that Poe's influence has been limited to short periods of time, although he admits

that Poe's theories on poetry, as well as his analysis of the creative process, have penetrated into Latin America. Torres-Rioseco states that Walt Whitman's influence, for example in the case of Lugones, has been predominantly an influence of poetic form. Nevertheless, he finds a greater influence of Walt Whitman in such poets as Pablo Neruda, Sabat Erasty, León Felipe, and Ronald de Carvalho.

According to our author, were we to examine the leading writers in Latin America today, we would find that North American influences are not prevalent. There are, of course, Latin American writers who reveal a superficial North American influence and others who show an extensive knowledge of North American literature, but no influence. The subject of influences is a difficult one, and Torres-Rioseco repeatedly reminds us of the danger of seeing influences where none exists.

In the last section of the volume, the author has collected four essays. Wisely, he has chosen to include reviews of books by two of Latin America's outstanding critics and literary historians. In his review of Enrique Anderson Imbert's *Historia de la literatura hispanoamericana* (Mexico, 1954), he not only enumerates the merits of this critical literary history but also points out its weaknesses. His praise is just, as are a number of his objections. There is one criticism, however, that seems quite harsh. In the last sentence of the review Torres-Rioseco says: "Con lo anterior queremos decir que si Anderson Imbert hubiera reducido su *Historia* a la décima parte de los autores estudiados nos habría dado una obra maestra" (p. 178).

Torres-Rioseco disagrees with the method of Luis Alberto Sánchez for classifying Latin American novelists (see his review of Sánchez' *Proceso y contenido de la novela hispanoamericana* [Madrid, 1953]). The Peruvian writer suggests the use of twenty categories to replace Torres-Rioseco's simpler system of three categories: *novelistas de la tierra*, *novelistas de la ciudad*, and *novelistas del modernismo*. After discussing the apparent difficulties of Sánchez' outline, our author insists that his own system of classification is still the most satisfactory.

This collection of critical essays is a valuable contribution to the field of Latin American literature and will facilitate an understanding of Hispanic letters. The essays reveal the author's vast knowledge of Latin American culture, his analytical appreciation of its artistic expressions, and his critical perception.

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CORRECTION

The correct title for the article by Phil Withim (see the June, 1959, issue) is "*Billy Budd: Testament of Resistance*," as given at the head of the article.

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